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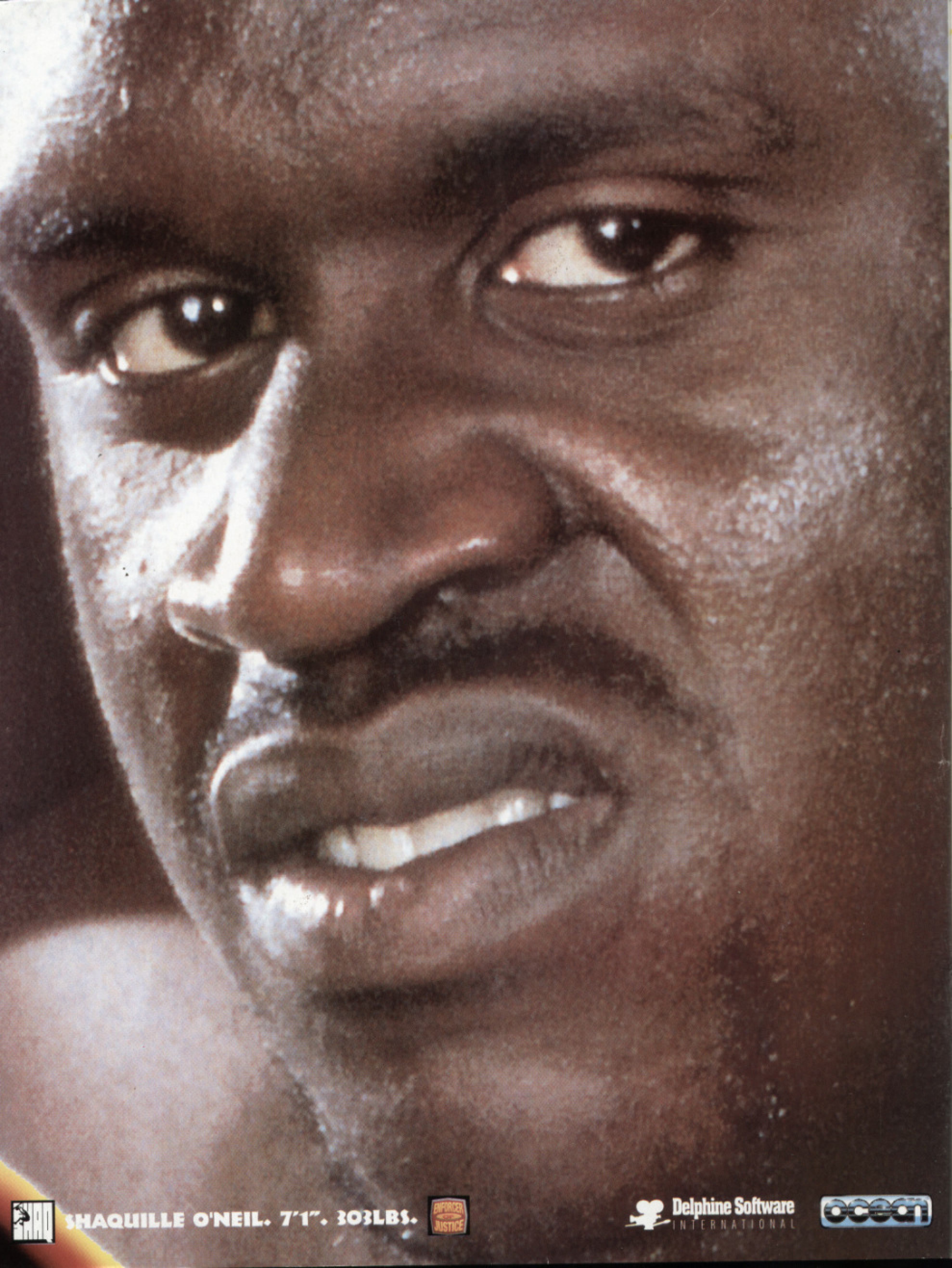
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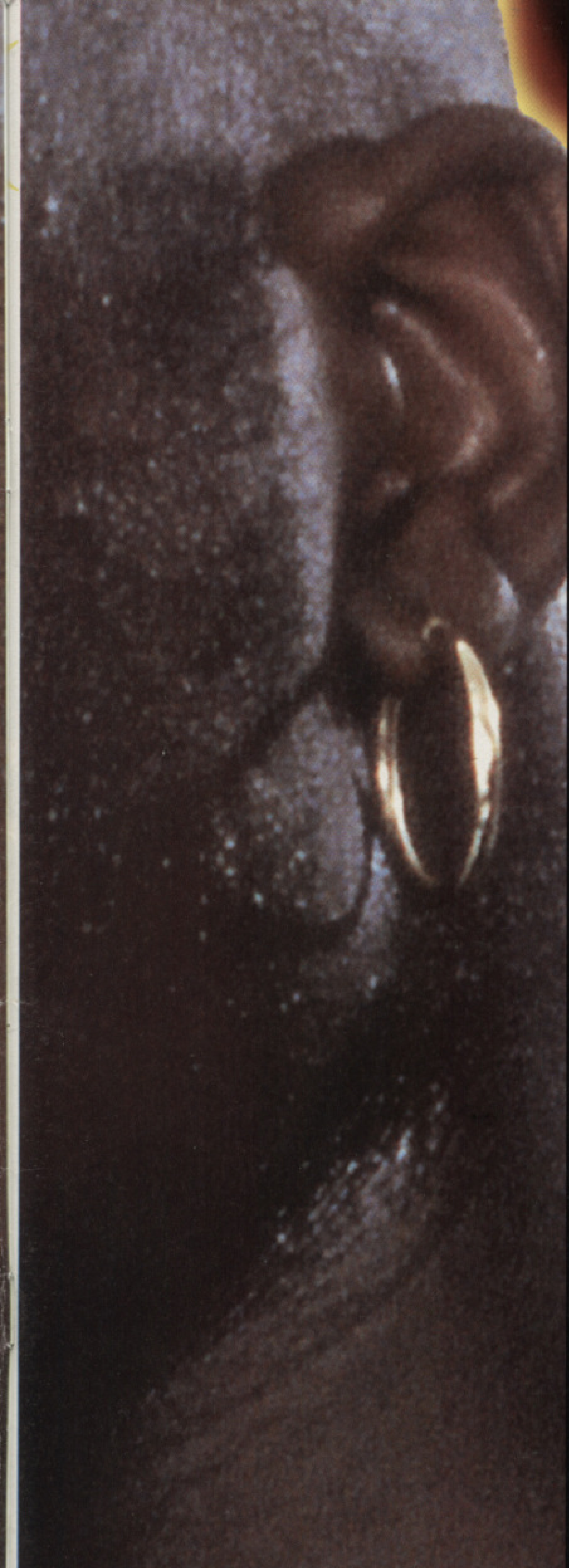
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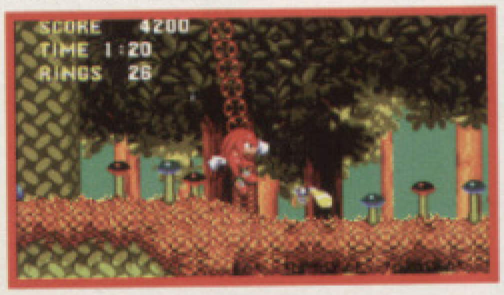


COVER STORY 16

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EXCLUSIVE

The world's most famous small mammal, probably, takes another step forward... and a few backward. MEAN MACHINES is their to record the next giant leap for hedgehog, and now echidna, kind.







REGULARS

REVIEWS

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EXCLUSIVE



NTENTS



CAN ACCOLADE TAKE THEIR FELINE HERO ONE STEP FURR-THER?

FEATURES

PREVIEWS

GAME GEAR

EDITORIAL

WHODUNNIT

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GREAT UNANSWERED QUESTIONS OF OUR TIME: Nos 11 and 12.
11. How do you solve a problem like Maria? 12. Why does the woman in the Pru ads stick with the guy if she can't stand him?

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STEVE

There's a lot of pessimism regarding the console industry at the mo, with every Tom, Dick-head and Harry all-too keen to dismiss it as a fad waiting to end. I have but one message for all these moaning minnies: you're talking crap. I'm in a very priviliged position where I get to see all the latest releases and machines first, and from this handy vantage point, I can see a very bright future indeed. The Megadrive has loads more mileage in it, as the likes of Earthworm Jim, MKII, and Mickey Mania prove, and the 32X is quite simply stunning. If there is one thing holding us back, it is these self same whingers spouting on as if they were the most informed people on earth. Whether they like it or not, video games are here to stay and are now as much a part of our culture as videos and music — I mean, if newspapers are jumping on the bandwagon, they're not likely to do it if they can't sell a few more issues are they? Let's face it, an hour or two on SSF II or whatever takes your fancy is as good a way to pass the time as any — and if your mates are busy dismissing games as old hat, plonk 'em down in front of some of your faves, and just watch the results. Video games are far from dead, so don't let anyone pronounce them so just yet...
Blimey, that was nearly topical. Er, I'm off for a lie down.

BLACKPOOL POWER!

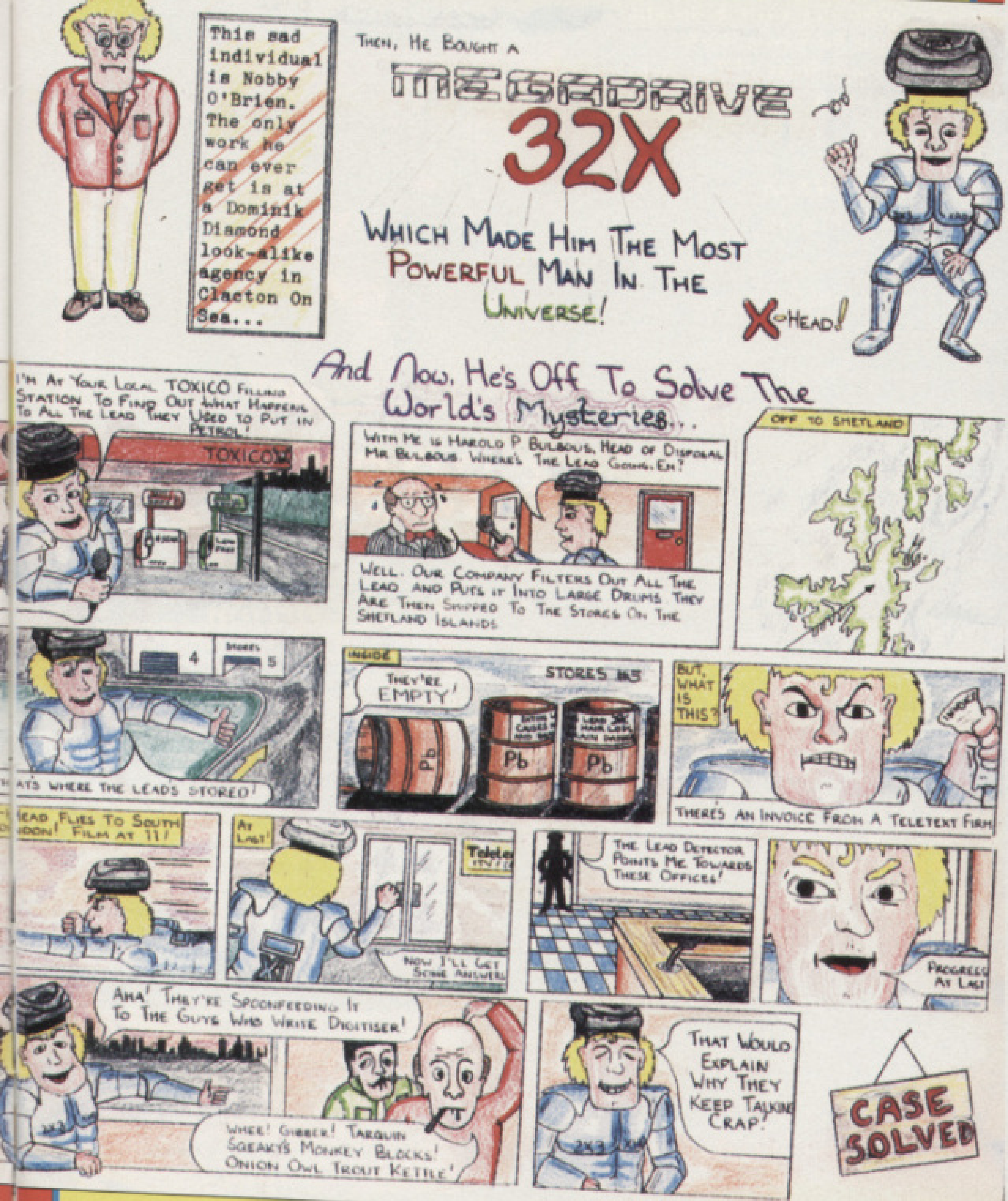
Remember we said we would be in Blackpool next month giving out free Sony games! Well we did! Actually, that's a lie, as the way the deadline of the issue has fallen, we're actually going up tomorrow. But Mystic Reg has already told us we had a fabulous time, and who are we to argue. After Gus slummed it alone in Brighton, Steve agreed to keep him company at Blackers, on the condition they stayed in a swank hotel, and spent the entire company profits in the Pleasure Beach (while pretending to be pursuing some 'reader interaction'). If you were lucky enough to profit by one of our prizes, congratulations. The rest of you suckers remember it pays to read MEAN MACHINES, and keep your eyes peeled. Next month 'Two go to Clacton' on Saturday, September the 10th. They'll be on the pier in the 'savvo' for the biggest give-away so far! I can smell the chips already...

SADLY UNFUNNY PHOTO

Someone sent us this rather poorly set-up humorous snapshot. It's an example of how not to get a picture printed in MEAN MACHINES. Let this be a lesson to you all.



RIAL



STRIP TEASE

It's very rare that a work of genius enters the office, but the adventures of X-head could hardly be called anything else. Mercilessly lampooning a certain 'on-line' games 'information' service, Captain Jupiter's work demands to be seen in all its glory. Keep 'em coming, cap'n!

THE A TEAM

There's nothing like buying your first record. We look back to what was top of the pops when the team lost their musical naivety.

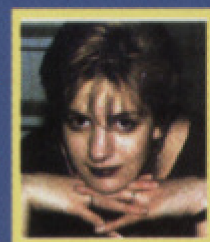
STEVE MERRETT



It was a heart-wrenching moment for Steve as he revealed to the assembled crowd that his first vinyl acquisition was 'Kool in the Kaftan', by B A Robertson (uncool early Eighties scot muso). Steve tried to justify his choice by informing us that it was B A who penned the highly esteemed 'Wogan' signature tune. Thus, thanks to B A, an entire nation of innocent TV viewers were given 30 seconds advance warning to change channel.

FAVE GAMES:MK II, Earthworm Jim

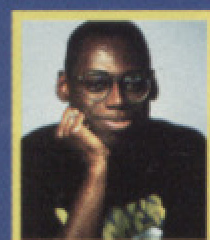
LUCY HICKMAN



It seems that our Lucy foresaw the Japanese console invasion by picking out 'Turning Japanese' by The Vapours. At the tender age of 9, a trip to Woolies saw her contribution to the band's success. These days, it's not uncommon to witness the arrival of Ms Hickman clad in a red silky kimono in readiness for the day ahead, armed with a few raw fish to chomp on.

FAVE GAMES:Urban Strike, Zero Tolerance, Earthworm Jim

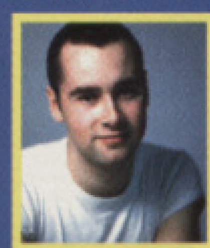
OZ BROWNE



Our resident Funkmeister, Oz certainly keeps the rest of the team in check when it comes to grooving tunes. Oz didn't really get into the record buying scene until late., and his first buy was Aretha Franklin's 'Who's Zooming Who?' Still, anything has to be better than his crooning to the Lion King soundtrack.

FAVE GAMES:Mortal Kombat II, Alien 3

ANGUS SWAN



Never knowingly outstyled, Gus kicked off his trend setting from day one with his record collection precariously based on top of 'Double Dutch' by Malcolm McClaren. But the truth will out, and after a heavy dose of unspeakable gaming torture (Pelé), he finally revealed his cool purchase was not from his own money. He'd received a free voucher with a new pair of Clark's Commandos and traded it in. Actually, it's about time he bought some new shoes.

FAVE GAMES:Ballz, Bubble and Squeak

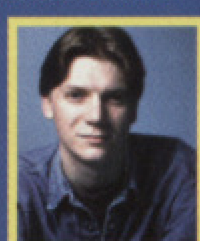
CLAIRE COULTHARD



Under Claire's demure facade lurks a passion unknown to the rest of the crew. For Claire is an undying Leo Sayer fan. In fact, she is so dedicated to her pop idol, it almost brought tears to her eyes as she recollected the immortal moment of buying her first Leo 7". "I remember as a lass, hassling me Mum and Dad to drive t'village to buy the single after'd seen him on TOTP. He's gorgeous". And the single in question, 'When I Need You'. Aaarrgh!

FAVE GAMES:Bubble and Squeak, Earthworm Jim

PAUL BUFTON



Back in the heady days of break dancing, Paul reveals he was a bit of a body popper. Reassuringly, he points out this activity never involved pieces of lino outside the local Asda. Instead, a more private substitute was the kitchen floor. It wasn't the inconvenience of not being able to get near the fridge that annoyed his Mum, but the constant repetitious beats of 'Hey You!', by the Rock Steady Crew, his first and most treasured single.

FAVE GAMES:Earthworm Jim, Zero Tolerance

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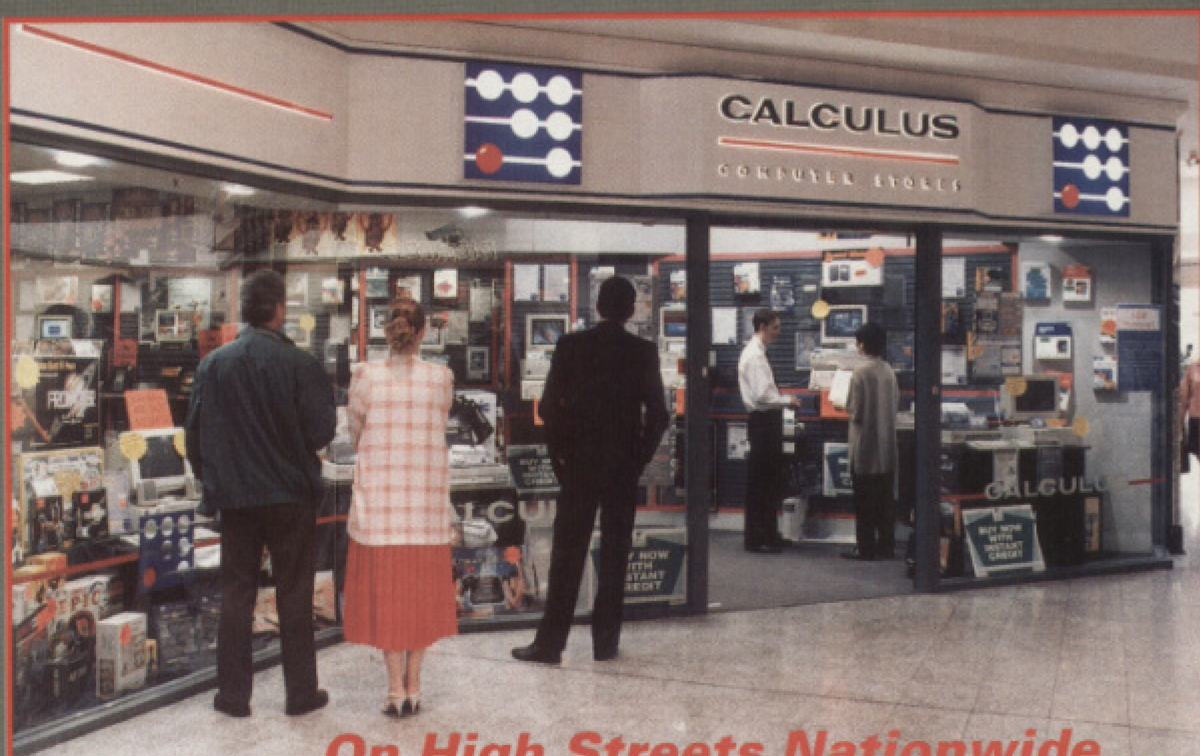
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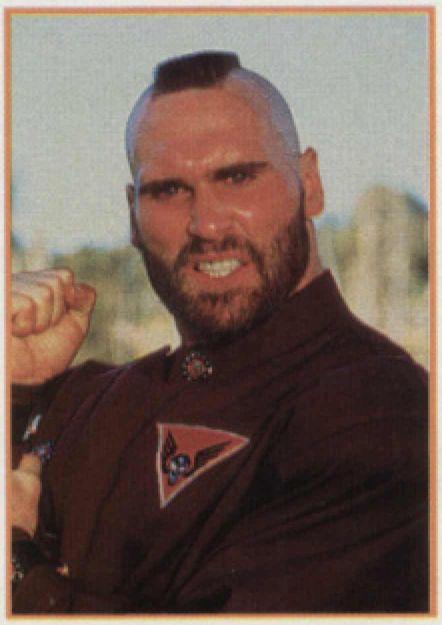
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- NEW FILM
- BY CAPCOM



STREET FIGHTER MOVIE — FIRST S

Cop a load of these! Shown on these very pages are the first film stills to emerge from the Australian set of the new Street Fighter movie! With Jean-Claude Van Damme popping his pecs as Guile, and ably (?) assisted by Kylie Minogue as Cammy, our heroes are locked in battle against the eternally-evil M. Bison and his many minions. The film is set in present-day Shadaloo in South-East Asia, a place devastated after seven months of civil war. As the battle escalates, the world is on the edge of global war as General M. Bison (played by Raul Julia — Gomez in The Addams Family) strengthens his evil cause by kid-napping a party of relief workers. With the $20 billion he is demanding for their release, he plans to expand his army and drive through his plans for world domination. Having given the authorities 72 hours to concede, the world awaits its fate.
In a last-ditch attempt to defeat Bison's plans, Colonel William F, Guile is ordered to locate and infiltrate Bison's secret base, and free the hostages using whatever means he deems necessary. Enrolling his intelligence officer, Cammy, and two fallen hero street fighters, Ken Masters and Ryu Hoshi, a plan is hatched to infiltrate Bison's domain. As Guile's team is assembled, Global News' chief reporter, Chun-Li and her assistant, Honda, are there to cover the story — although her innocent looks prove deceptive...
Guile's plan involves the team attempting to infiltrate the notorious Shadaloo Tong master-minded by known Bison consort, Viktor Sagat. As the plans comes together, we are promised more scraps than a bacon factory, and a host of other recognisable Street Fighter heroes as the plot unfolds. With a PG rating, Capcom are hoping the film will hit the UK's silver screens in time for Christmas. It looks like it will be a Street Fighting new year...





NEWS





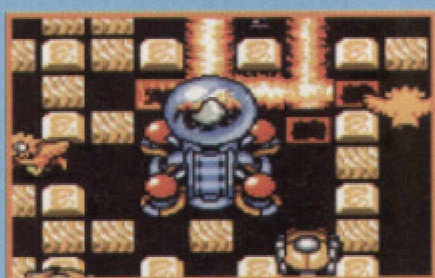
MEGA BOMBERMAN! IT'S ON ITS WAY!



- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- MEGADRIVE







After months of gossip and speculation, we can finally reveal that Hudsonsoft's superb Mega Bomberman is about to hit the Megadrive! Sega have confirmed the game for a November release, and — even better — are hoping to release the 8MEG cart for a paltry £35!

Mega Bomberman is a mixture of the original PC Engine game and Virgin's forthcoming Super NES sequel. Having selected your hero from the cast available, the game can be played either as a progressive puzzler or as a frenetic four-player game. In the former, the player is left to destroy a series of metallic turrets which allow Bomberman access to a tower holding a missing piece of a magical locket. The locket is then assembled on a mosaic room, unleashing some horrendous bosses. The multi-player game, on the other hand, is more arcade orientated, with the players collecting as many power-ups as possible in order to lay complex traps to kill their opponents. All the usual Bomberman goodies are there, including multi bombs, the ability to kick bombs, and devices to extend their range. However, one rather neat new addition, are a series of cuddly kangaroos which effectively double Bomberman's lifespan and also allow him to jump, kick blocks, and run faster.

A full review will appear next issue, so stay tuned for the definite review...

YOU DON'T SAY...

More gossipy goings-on within the Sega scene...

Let's start with that fantastic (ahem) ITV show Scavengers. Movie giants, Fox, are currently showing immense interest in the video game scene. Amongst the likes of Alien 4 and The Pagemaster, they were also contemplating a game based on Scavengers. However, the programme hasn't exactly set the world alight (can you imagine an ex-Blue Peter presenter as a hard-edge space marine?) and the game is a non-starter.

Namco are busy building up a healthy Sega catalogue, and their first two releases — are Starblade for the Mega-CD and Pac-Attack 2 both— have been snapped up by Sega. The former is looking very nice indeed, and the second takes the basic format of the Tetris, adapting it to the rotund smiling one's character. Also, watch these pages for news of Secret Forces from Core. To look forward to, methinks...

Without being too disconsolate, I'm afraid it has been a bit of a slack month for good news, with even more games falling by the wayside. Virgin have scrapped plans for the Megadrive and Mega-CD versions of Demolition Man (the latter of which would have featured specially-filmed animations of both Sly and Wesley), and the weird death-on-ice, Dino Blades is also a Megadrive Dodo.

We've also heard from a little birdie which tells us that Elite may not be heading for the Megadrive either. And Core's plans for Heimdall II on the Mega-CD have died, too.

Ah well, we'll end on a lighter note with news of a new, totally original footy game for the Mega-CD, courtesy of Hudsonsoft. The Japanese heroes are busy writing a footy game featuring all manner of digitised footage and using a Sensi-style overhead view. Probe are handling the coding duties.

'Til next month,
Pip Pip



CORE TEE-OFF ON SATURN

- NEW GAME
- BY SEGA
- MEGADRIVE

Always one to jump on the new machine bandwagon, Core Design are aiming to bring all the thrills, spills and silly trousers to the 32X and Saturn as they unveil Tee-Off, an ultra-realistic golf game. Using real maps for the courses, and a mixture of vectors and bitmaps for the courses, Core aim to make Tee-Off the 32bit golfing benchmark. As of yet, the game only exists as one short hole, with the Saturn version looking considerably more detailed with more backdrops and ground detail. However, we know you're all excited about new 32bit games, so here's a real, live screen shot to tide you over until the full preview appears.

PUNISH ME GENTLY

- NEW GAME
- BY CAPCOM
- MEGADRIVE





He's big, he's tough, we've seen him in the buff... Or something. Anyway, it's the Punisher, he's very, very hard and he's coming to a Megadrive near you soon so be very, very frightened. He's not your run of the mill superhero — he doesn't wear tights, and he's got super-powerful weapons and combat skills. Converted from the Capcom coin-op, The Punisher has our eponymous hero joining forces with another Marvel Comic marvel — Nick Fury — as they blast their way from here to kingdom come. Shoot first, ask questions later, that's their motto and they don't just rely on the fantastic weaponry that's up for grabs, as they're pretty good with their bare hands. Looks good, more later.



TENGEN GET INTO A RAGE

- NEW GAME
- BY TENGEN
- MEGADRIVE

Already being touted as 1995's answer to MKII, Primal Rage is a rather smart coin-op starring a series of battling dinosaurs — and Tengen are rather pleased to announce they'll be converting it to assorted Sega systems late next year. Primal Rage is a one-on-one scrappathon, with the mighty beasts using their tails and special moves to proceed to the next bout, with digitised animations giving the game a real B-movie look. Tengen are also overseeing the coin-op's production, so are hoping to ensure the resultant conversions are as close as possible. There are no concrete detail regarding the game's release date or developers, but we'll be exclusively unveiling this monster of a beat 'em up as soon as there's something to see.

▼ ***Not yer average New Age Traveller.***



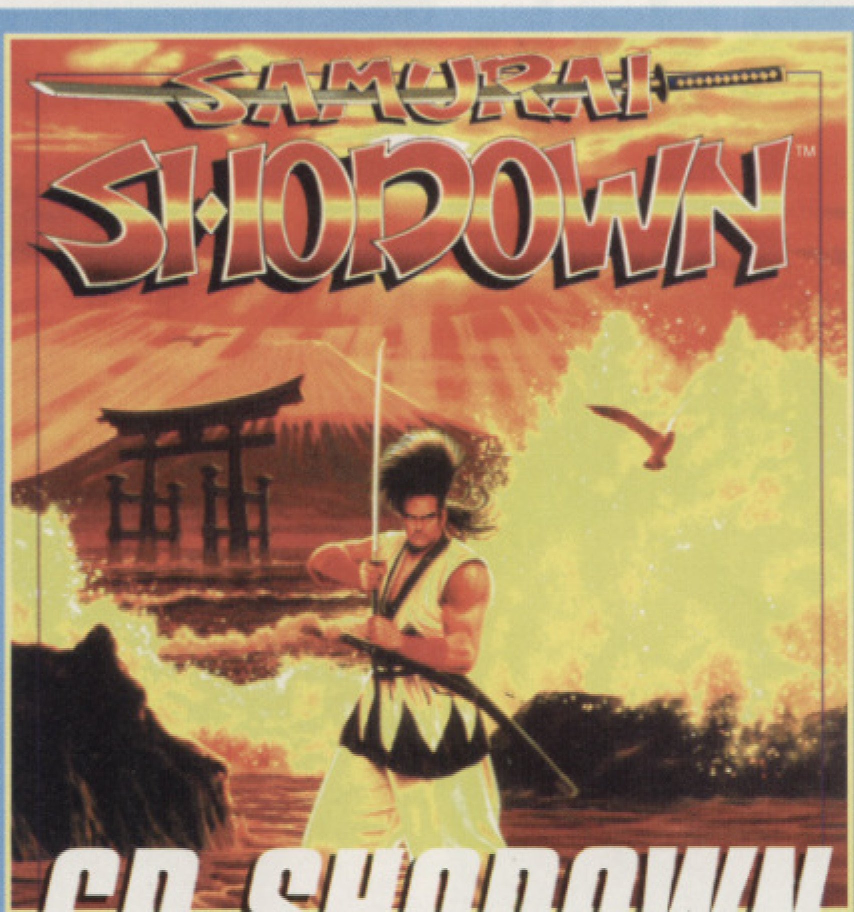


MEGA MEGAMAN

- NEW GAME
- BY CAPCOM
- MEGADRIVE



The Megaman games are some of the best-selling console titles ever with over 2 million of them flying off the shelves to date. Now, as mentioned, those mega Megaman games are coming to the Megadrive, courtesy of Capcom. Although a European release has not yet been finalised, Megaman: The Wily Wars sounds like a corker. It's a compilation pack with enhanced versions of MegaMan I, II and III packed onto one cart. Capcom have spruced up the games in all departments and included a new bonus section and all-new bosses. Gosh. More news when we get it.



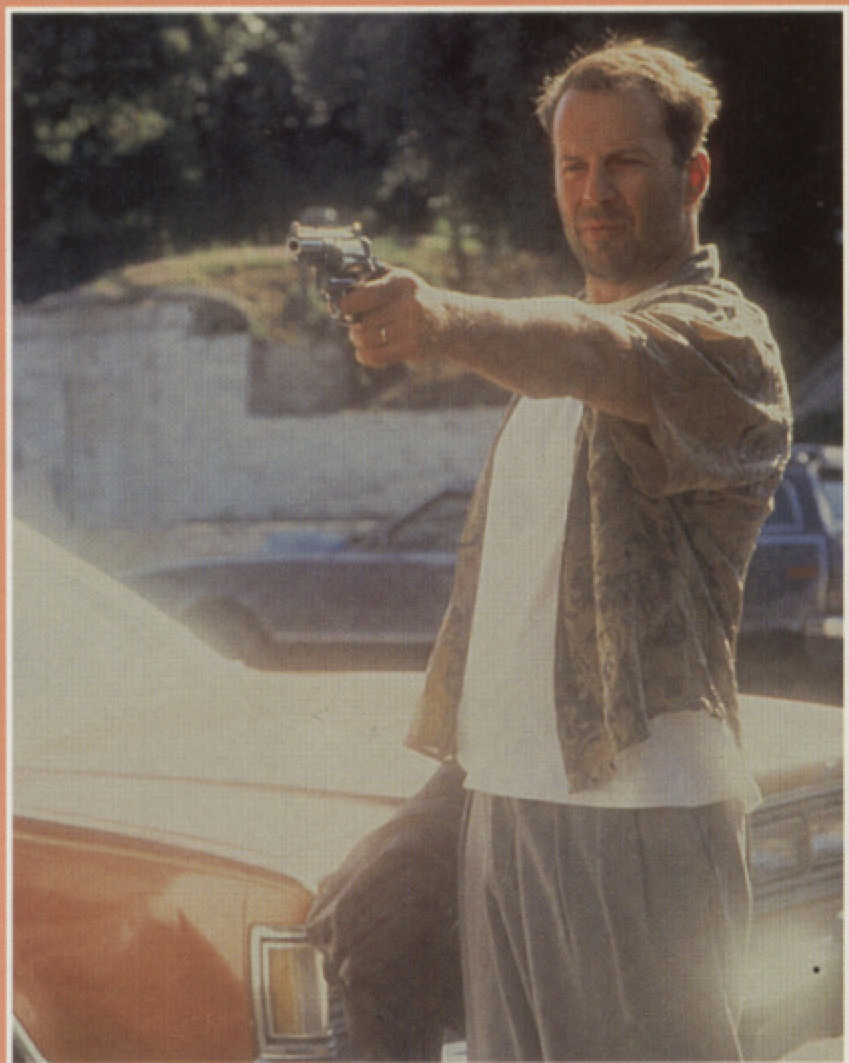
CD SHODOWN

- NEW GAME
- BY JVC
- MEGA-CD

Following last month's news of a Megadrive conversion of Samurai Shodown, JVC have confirmed they are set to release a Mega-CD version in the UK early next year.

According to the chaps at JVC, the Mega-CD version is almost identical to the coin-op, with all the original's scaling and massive sprites surviving the transition. Samurai Shodown should be heading for a February release alongside a Mega-CD conversion of Fatal Fury Special, both of which we'll be investigating next issue.

FOX DIE HARDEST



- NEW GAME
- BY FOX
- 32X

Already lining up as one of 1995's blockbuster movies, Fox have announced they are currently developing Megadrive, 32X and Saturn games based on Die Hard 3. As with Acclaim's Alien Trilogy, it seems likely Fox will opt to combine the events of the first three films in one game, with the player donning John McClean's grubby vest and whittling away gangs lead by Alan Rickman and Die Hard III's bad geezer, Jeremy Irons. Details regarding game details have yet to be confirmed, but we believe Probe are the team set to pixelise Brucey (Willis, not Forsythe), and we'll be keeping a very close eye on this indeed.

MORTAL II FOR THE MASTER SYSTEM!

YES! YES! YES! Master System owners all over the world should start to rejoice, as Acclaim have committed themselves to producing a version of MKII for your machines. Once again, Probe are handling the programming chores, and it should be an almost identical conversion of the brilliant Game Gear version, we'll have a full review in our very next issue, so we will.







- NEW GAME
- BY ACCLAIM
- MASTER SYSTEM

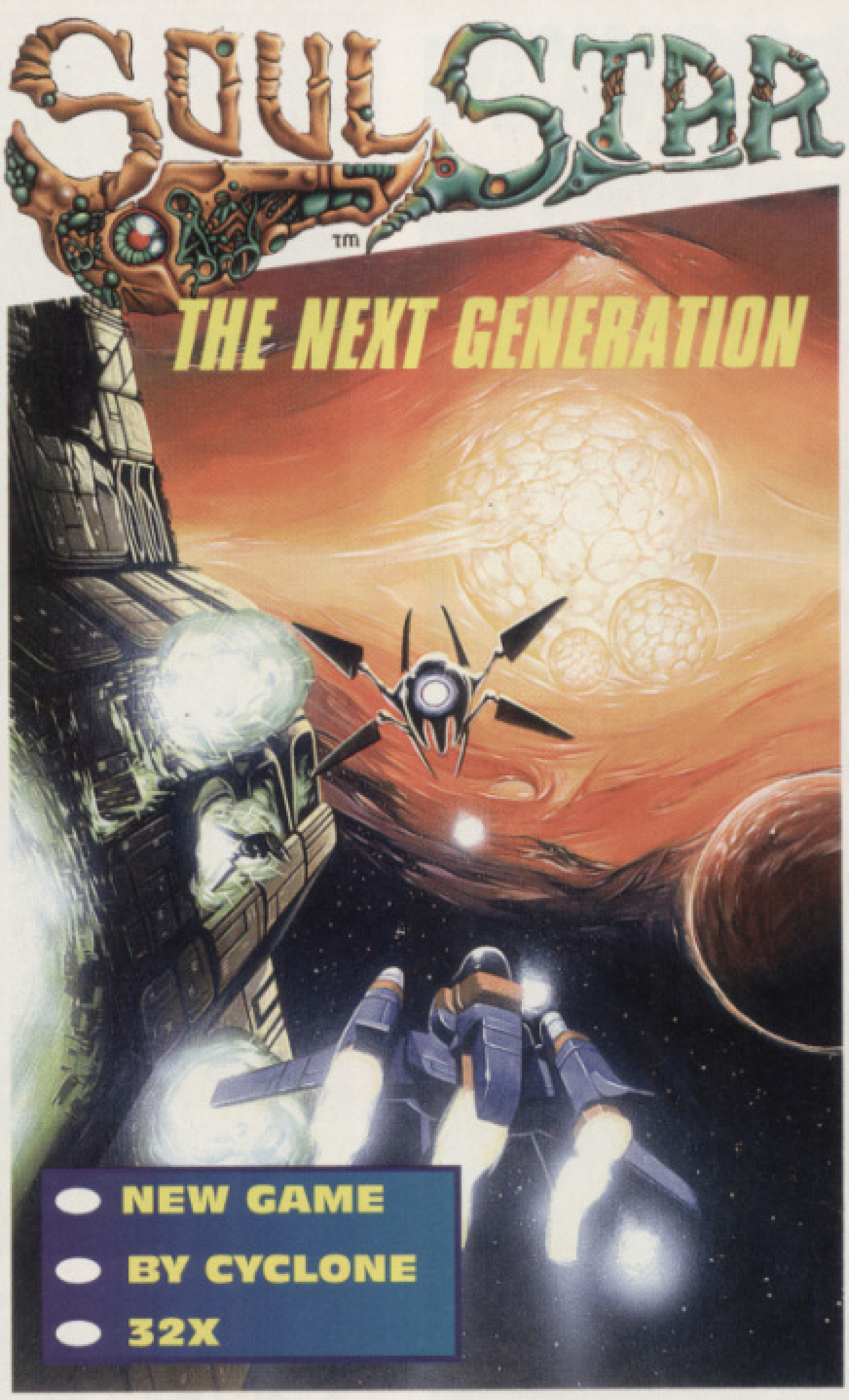
OCEAN SIGN CANTONA AND CO!



- NEW GAME
- BY OCEAN
- MEGADRIVE

Fans of messrs Eric "Dirty, Foulin' Git" Cantona, Ryan Giggs and "Sparky" Hughes will be well chuffed to learn that Ocean are preparing a footy game based on those particular footballing chappies and the team they play for, Manchester United. According to Ocean, the game will be seen from one of two viewpoints, either a FIFA-style isometric slant or the more conventional bird's-eye view. Development is leading on the Super NES version, and the Megadrive version should appear early next year — by which time the Red Devils will probably be firmly seated at the top of the Premier Division. Sods.

SOULSTAR™ THE NEXT GENERATION



- NEW GAME
- BY CYCLONE
- 32X

In addition to Tee-Off, Core's plans for 32X domination now include conversions of both Soulstar and BC Racers. Both games are currently being expanded for the Sega plug-in, with Soulstar set to benefit from considerably faster 3D effects and a handful of new levels and bosses. Similarly, Core's plans for a 32X BC Racers will include a selection of new characters, the possibility of a split-screen two-player mode, and extra courses and hazards. There's nowt to see of either conversion at the moment, but Core are hoping for their dynamic duo to be ready for February next year.

PILE OF YANK

All is not well Stateside, in the home of the brave, as our fearless freelance Jaz Rignall explains...

What's going on? The industry seems to be on a one-way ticket to Boredom Central! I haven't had a decent game to play in weeks. Only the likes of Socks the Cat. This teetering pile of old pee follows the story of President Clinton's cat and the antics that he allegedly gets up to in the White House. What next? The Presidential Poo, which details the knockabout hijinks of America's first log as it wends its way through Washington DC's sewage system? And there's Clay Fighter and Art of Fighting, both of which are fighting games that pale into infinitesimal dots when compared to good ol' Super Street Fighter II.

Currently on test over here is a rather interesting idea from New Leaf Technologies: it's called a FlashROM. Basically, you saunter down to your local major software retailer, buy yourself one of these and tell the kindly grinning geezer behind the counter what game you want. Johnny Shop Boy then presses a couple of buttons and hey presto! You have your desired game on the cartridge. Should you become bored witless of that game you can cruise back down to the shop from whence it came, get the game erased and another one put on instead. And you can do this as many times as you like. Or, if you really like the game, keep it and buy another FlashROM cart. Software houses spend less on manufacturing zillions of cartridges and those savings can be passed onto you. This system is currently on test in a couple of US states, but if it's successful, it could change the way we buy games.
That's it. I'm off outside to kick a rusty bucket and to annoy next door's dog. See you next month.
Jaz

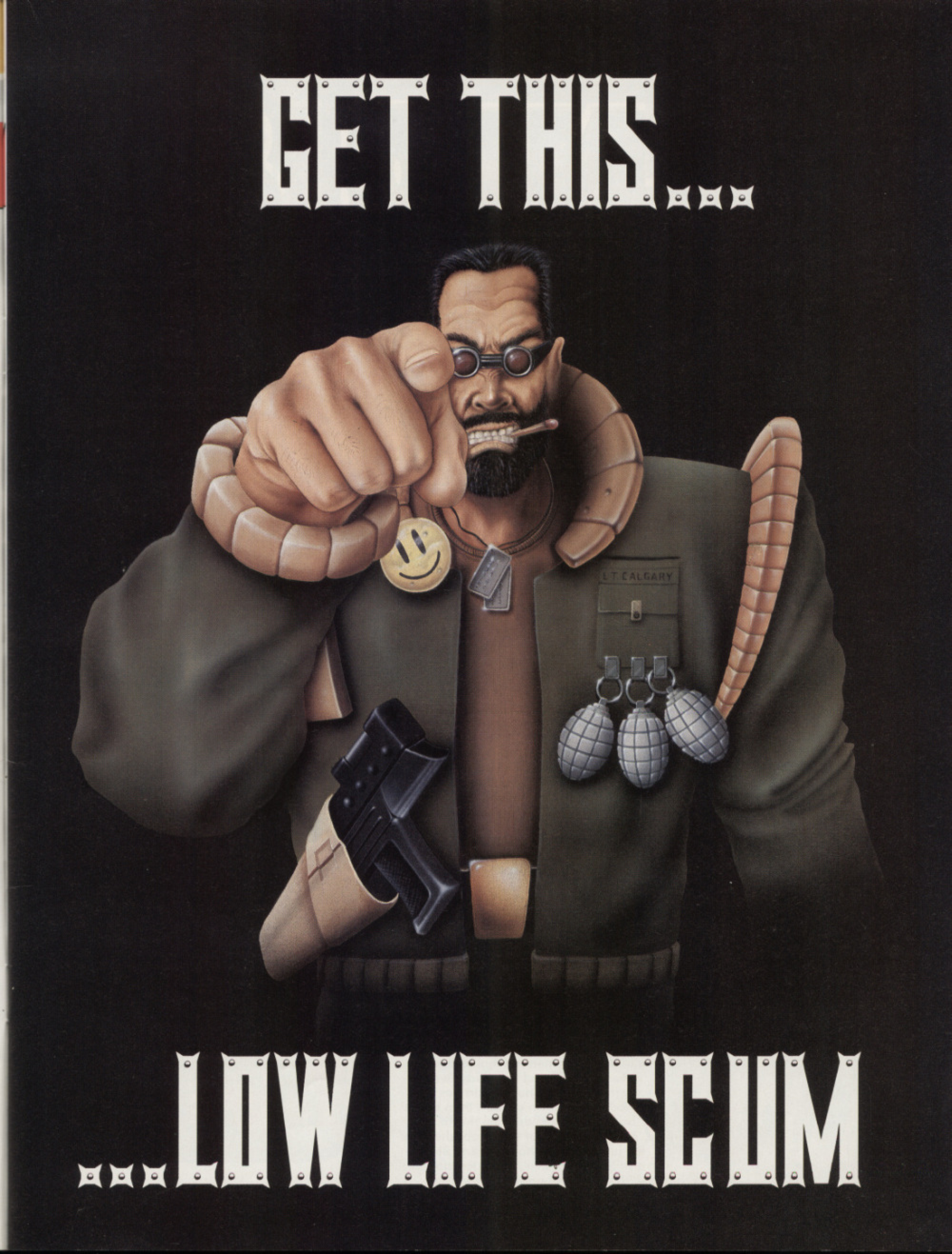
WIN! SONIC STICKER GOODIES!



To celebrate the imminent launch of their Sonic sticker collection, Panini have given us 200 ALBUMS to give away. What's more, each of the winners will also receive 5 packs of stickers to start their collection!

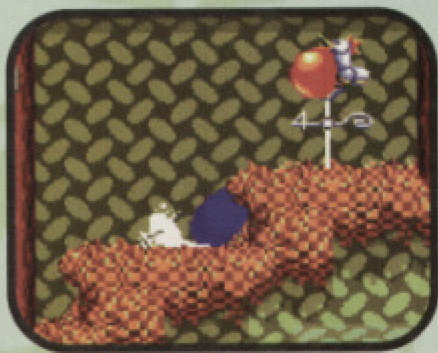
The stickers follow everyone's favourite blue hedgehog's adventures, and when complete make a fully illustrated history of his plentiful escapades. To win one of the 300 album sets, just answer the following question: Name Sonic's pink adversary in Sonic 3.

Having done that, send your entry to STICK 'EM UP COMPO, at the using MEAN MACHINES SEGA address.

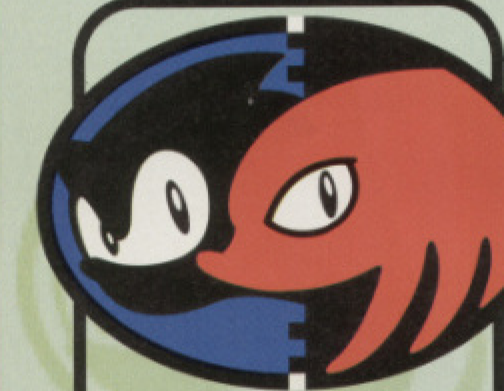

GET THIS...
L.T. CALGARY
...LOW LIFE SCUM

SONIC & K

1-2 PLAYERS	
16 MEG	
RELEASE	NOVEMBER
BY	SEGA
PRICE	TBA
GAME TYPE	PLATFORM
PERCENT COMPLETE	



▲ *See this bit, well it hasn't really changed that much.*

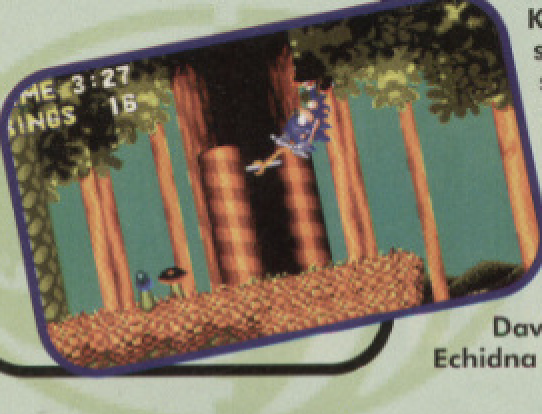


There are few things in gaming as intriguing as a new Sonic game, especially when it looks as luscious as this. Britain's best loved unstoppable games animal gave a frank preview to MEAN MACHINES of what's to come.

The company known as Sega must scour the book of mammals looking for unlikely creatures when adopting a new video games hero. Take Sonic, 'needlemouse' (common or garden hedgehog, if you will). Not noted as the fastest or feistiest of animals in nature. In fact not even noted in Japan at all, since it's indigenous to Europe. After a stint with the Japanese image-makers, the timid drinks-milk-from-saucers-and-gets-flattened image was dropped in favour of being the world's fastest video games super-hero. But after three Megadrive outings, the 'living dangerously' tag is getting a tad familiar. So the success of one spiky quadraped has evolved into another, Sonic's enemy turned mate, Knuckles.

Knuckles, for those who missed Sonic 3 early this year, is an Echidna. When that's at home (home being Australia, New Guinea and that general neck of the rainforest), an Echidna is a marsupial, a strange hedgehog-like mammal with spines, a long snout used to eat ants (its main diet), and an inquisitive nature. It's several times bigger than a hedgehog. But in the game, Knuckles is much the same size, pink instead of dirty brown, and doesn't eat any ants.

Sonic fans should not be misled into thinking that Knuckles is just another stunt friend in the way Tails seems to have been. The naive little fox seems to have suffered at the hands of Sega's fickle affections. He was 'in' for 2, 'out' for CD, played a supporting role in 3, and has had the bum's rush for Sonic and Knuckles. But in the latest game you can play specifically as Knuckles, and the character has impressive abilities of his own. In fact, he even seems to have an edge over Sonic in the muscle department. Perhaps Sega haven't considered the ultimate nightmare — young Knuckles arrives as modest unknown co-star, then by his brilliant performance begins to take over the career of the established starlet, just like what happened to Bette Davis in 'All About Eve'. Knuckles the Echidna 4? It could yet happen...



DON'T TURN AROUND

Sonic and Knuckles is a further example of Sega's taste for innovation in the last year, as a means of keeping gamers' interest alive. After the SVP used in Virtual Racing, and the arrival of 24MEG carts, comes the plug-through connector on Sonic and Knuckles, allowing you to explore new effects on previous Sonic games.

The idea of the game being 'backwardly compatible' goes back to Sonic 3, when there was a fair amount of confusion as to three secret levels, plug-in carts and the like. At that time, rumours abounded of a deluxe Sonic 3 cart, supposedly of 32MEG size, which would feature an extended version of the game. Not surprisingly, this would have miffed the many Megadrive owners who could only afford the standard edition. Perhaps wisely, the idea never

LOSING THE PLOT

You could be forgiven for losing the story with concern to Sonic, Robotnik and just how exactly Knuckles fits in. In '2', Tails and Sonic confronted Robotnik on the Sky Fortress, to retrieve the Chaos Emeralds of Moebius. After successfully retrieving them, the pair escaped on their trusty bi-plane. Landing on a nearby tropical island, they find Robotnik has also escaped the wrecked fortress, and recruited Knuckles, by deception it turns out.



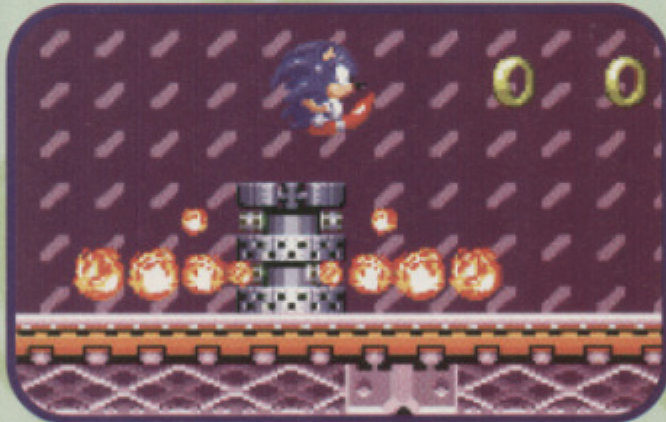
KNUCKLES



came to fruition, but players who accessed the level select found evidence of three of the zones that are part of Sonic and Knuckles: Mushroom Hill, Sandopolis and Flying Fortress.

Sega are stressing the fact that Sonic and Knuckles is a stand-alone game in its own right, and not just an enhancement for previous Sonic games. Nevertheless, most potential buyers will anticipate the feature that allows you to plug in Sonic 2 and 3 and play as Knuckles, adding a whole new dimension to gameplay, by virtue of his special powers.

And another thing! With Sonic 3 specifically, the game opens up new levels in addition to those of the stand-alone game. The precise nature of these is not yet known. Sadly no new levels are offered on the other two Sonic games.



▲ *Remember kids, never play with large gas cookers.*





After a scuffle, the emeralds are lost throughout the island, and Sonic has to face both opponents, before defeating Robotnik in his airborne Death Egg contraption again. Now, the Sonic and Knuckles plot begins, as Robotnik's contraption falls to the island, settling on the crater of the volcano. The chaos emeralds are once again lost. But an element of mystery surrounds the relationship of Sonic and Knuckles. Playing as Sonic, you occasionally require the assistance of the Echidna, who duly turns up to open doors, etc. But is he really on your side?







THE NEW WORLD

A glimpse of some of the new worlds that make up Sonic and Knuckles. We also detail some of the interesting effects and features we found on each. How charming they look:

BITCH OR BUTCH?

Knuckles brings a new set of moves to Sonic gameplay, which changes the game scenario significantly. For example, playing the first level as Sonic requires the assistance of Knuckles at an important switch, which the Echidna can just bomb through himself. Played in conjunction with Sonic 2 and 3, the extra powers will open up new areas of layout.



CLIMBING

Sheer faces which would normally be impassable now provide handholds for Knuckles. He can even jump from wall to wall. However, the technique is slow and leaves him vulnerable.



FLYING

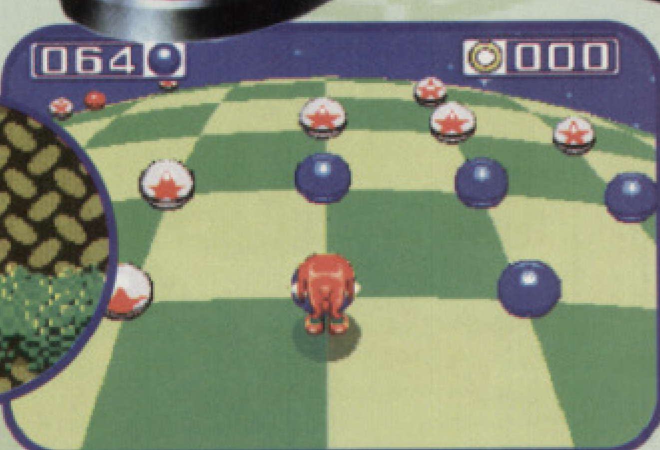
By holding down the B button, Knuckles changes his mid-air trajectory, allowing him to glide to earth. It makes him more controllable in the air, and better equipped to take out adversaries.



BASHING

Some impenetrable landscape features, like stone blocks, can now be destroyed with a quick burst of Knuckles' speed.





MUSHROOM HILL

The first zone, split into two stages, that soon make you realise the game isn't going to be a pushover. Grassy knolls, long-stemmed grasses and the bouncy, spotted toadstools that give the level its title and character. The familiar Sonic runways are formed by larger than life foliage.

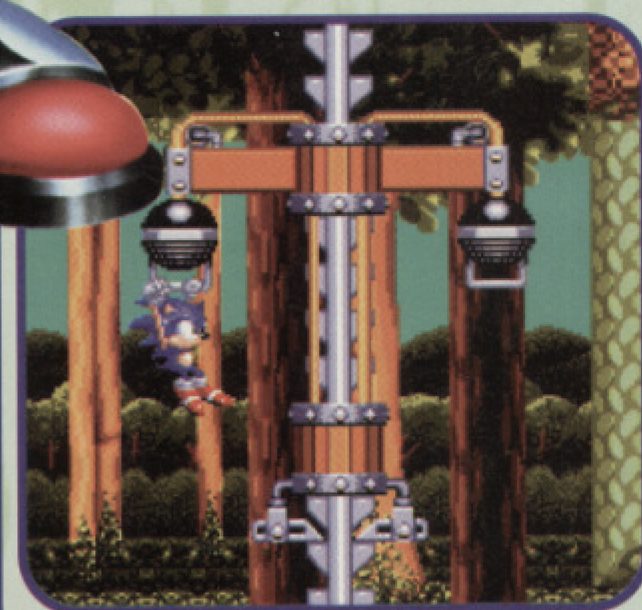
PARACHUTE

Sail gently to terra firma on these redcap parachutes, allowing you to travel to inaccessible mid-air areas.



RATCHET LIFT

This odd, double handled lifting device works a bit like a zip fastener or car jack, allowing Sonic to reach higher levels, but taking time.







ELASTIC SNARE

A new feature, which must use some lovely inertia programming routines. Passing this trap activates one or both bungee snares that hinder Sonic or Knuckles until they spin free.



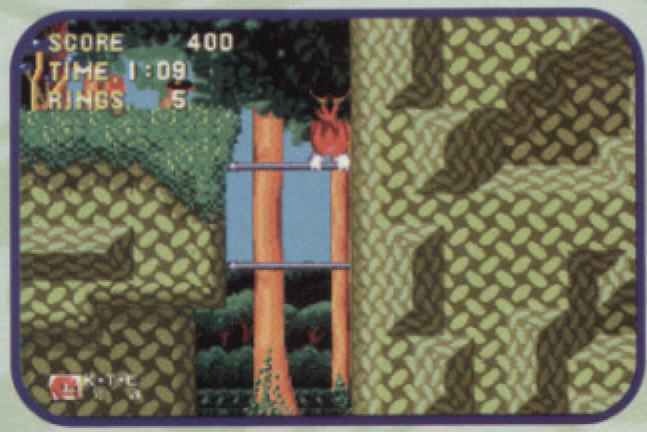
MUSHROOM SEE-SAW

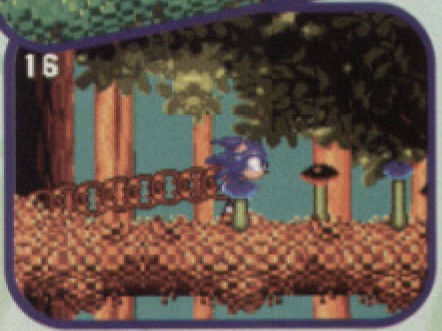
The old comedy classic, beloved of many a Warner cartoon. Jumping on one end propels the weight, which in turn propels you to new heights.



SPIN BARS

These were featured in Sonic 3's underwater zone, giving Sonic something to grip. Now they're revamped to appear in other zones, and Sonic now swings around them for extra momentum.

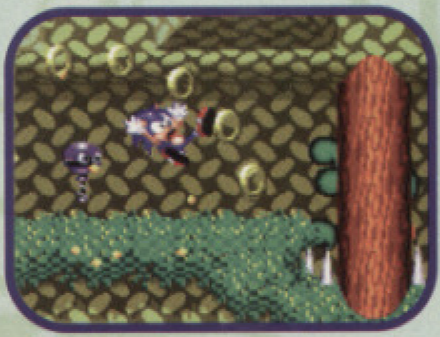




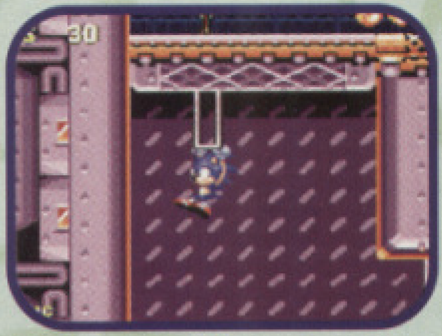
▲ *"Hoorah! My chest expander has arrived at long last..."*



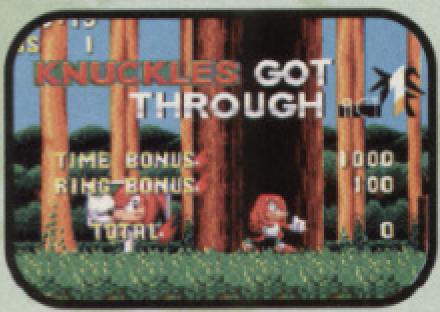
▲ *I was thinking of a doing an 'it's all downhill from here' gag for this.*



▲ *Damn Knuckles and his collection of comedy banana skins.*



▲ *The Great Sonici's trapeze career was never destined to last long.*

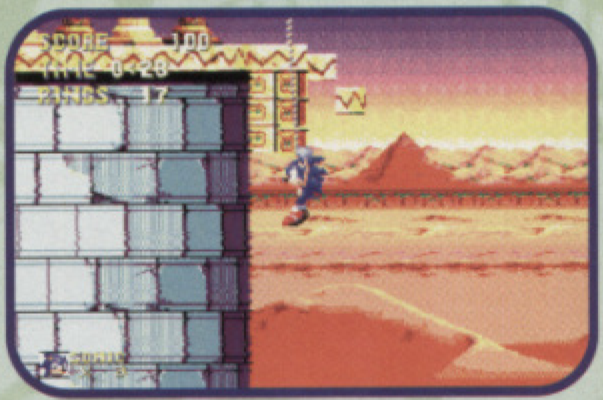


SANDOPOLIS

Ancient Egypt is the inspiration for this two-part zone, a rollicking and rather fast combination of sand-dancing, Indiana Jones-style rope-swinging and archeological exploring (part of the section takes place in Pyramid constructions). The dune and sunset parallax backdrops look stunning.

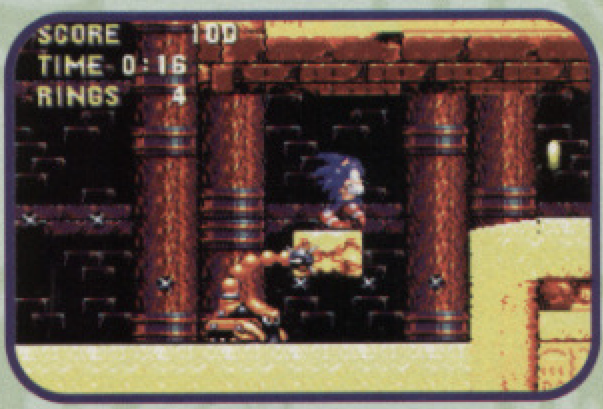
ABSEILING

Perhaps dangling is the best description for this feature, as neat animation shows Sonic spinning in three dimensions as he descends through the ruins.



SCORPION TANKS

Anyone familiar with British Forces' armoury will appreciate the visual pun of these contraptions, and their block carrying abilities may be utilised.



SAND SLIDE

Lose your footing and either of the duo could find themselves sliding to oblivion. Undeniably fun, but carries a health warning.

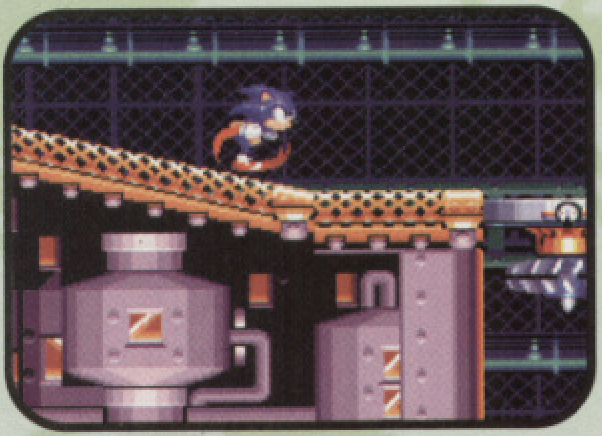


FLYING FORTRESS

What our pics fail to show is the massive extent of Robotnik's floating metallic monster of an airship. The theme for this level is fire and steel, a lot of both.

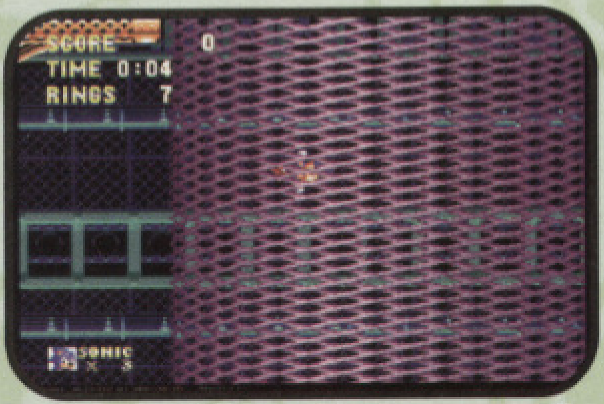
FLAME BATTERY

Looking all the world like the flame bar on an upright gas cooker, these areas threaten chargrilled hedgehog, unless you tear across them at the right time.



MESH

Reminiscent of the tubes on Sonic 3 carnival zones, these rotating cylinders produce a delightful sensation of motion, and a hell of a lot of velocity.



MONKEY BARS

Identical to the bit on the Gladiators' Eliminator, where Sonic shows off his biceps for the first time ever.

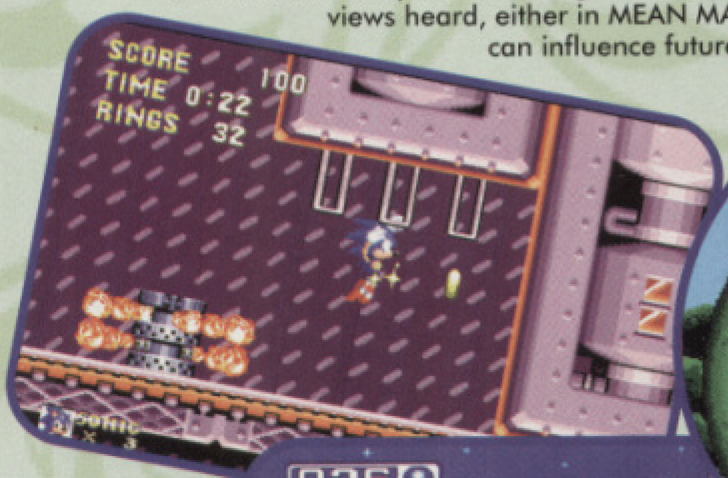


ENGINE OF ORDER

It will not take long to notice that the Sonic and Knuckles 'engine' is the same as that of Sonic 3. The engine is the programming system used to piece the game together, and it produces the general graphical and aural presentation; gameplay feel; and style of the game. Re-using game engines is a common thing, EA do it regularly with their sports range updates. Sonic 3's engine was different to that of one or two, being put together by STI (Sonic Team). The size of sprites and backgrounds were noticeably increased, and levels were structured to have more height as well as larger width, making for more exploration. Sonic 3 also had a 'theme park' feel, with various contraptions fitted into the landscape, which affected Sonic's control or gave a great burst of speed.

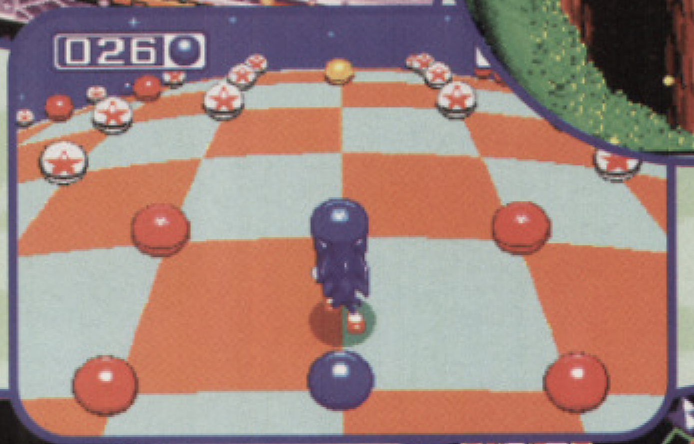
In all these elements, Sonic and Knuckles does look like a close relative of its predecessor, but this is not to say it's not an all-new game. Completely new scenery has been created, with more refinement and less chunkiness than Sonic 3, levels are all newly designed, and the contraptions are all original.

In many ways, creating something from an existing engine has allowed the programmers to make a better game. They can see the parts of Sonic 3 that players enjoyed and make more of them in Sonic and Knuckles, while stripping out sections that didn't work. One obvious example of this is the save game mode. Much was made of Sonic 3 having multiple save positions, that allowed you to start from any level previously attained. Handy for reviewers, but it made the game much too easy to finish! Needless to say, after a sea of complaints, it has gone. An example of how making your views heard, either in MEAN MACHINES or to Sega directly, can influence future games.





▲ That's the bit that made Sonic famous in the first place that is.



▲ A section of the cart's Krypton Factor sub-game.

▼ I'm really tired and can't think of anything funny. Sorry.





▲ Crcikey, that looks like a revamped piece of the fruit machine sub-game.

MULTIMEDIA

For those of you who don't own a Megadrive, don't get bitter and jealous. Remember that Sonic Spinball is out soon on Game Gear, and that Sonic Chaos 2 will grace the Master System and Game Gear before Christmas. There are even moves afoot to translate the Sonic the Hedgehog coin-op for the 32X, and we think that's just fab.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Page

There's mucho talk about the gap between video games and the movies disappearing, and now Fox and Sega are aiming to narrow the gap a little more as their first entry into the world of feature-length cartoons heads Segawards. Needless to say, Steve Merrett was there.

Having been Home Alone twice, and currently Getting Even With Dad, Macaulay Culkin is now preparing to enter the cartoon medium in Fox's Christmas biggie, The Page Master. Mac plays a wimpy kid by the name of Richard Tyler who is terrified of absolutely anything — we're talking about a kid who would wear body armour in a Baseball game.

The film's brief filmed prologue starts with Tyler returning one day from a day's simpering, only to be caught in a torrential downpour which escalates into a full-blown thunderstorm. Spotting a decrepit old library, he heads for it only to encounter the spooky Page Master of the title whose hooded appearance sends our unlikely hero scuttling for cover. Retreating as fast as possible, Mac stumbles down a set of stairs only to find himself coming to in a world made up entirely of cartoons and nursery rhyme characters and where Macca's three animated allies are voiced by the likes of Whoopi Goldberg and Patrick Stewart.

With the film set to appear sometime in November courtesy of Fox, the Megadrive interpretation of Mac's adventures is coming from Sega themselves. With the film a rich source of animation ideas and characters, it fell to Croydon-based Probe to cram the film into a 16MEG cart. And this is what they've done...

MOVING ON UP

For the most part, Page Master is a platformer, with the player guiding Richard as he runs, jumps, slides and destroys anything in his path with a well-timed bum-bounce or whatever weapon he's holding at the time. However, to add a little spice to the proceedings, Probe have included a 3D section which sees our hero riding a magic book to his next destination — with a scaling system akin to the Super NES's Mode 7 capabilities. "The 3D section was added midway through the game's development," said Tony. "Originally, the plan was to keep it 100 percent platforms, but we felt it would be a nice touch." So far, though, the only Megadrive game to use such a 3D system is Tengen's Lawnmower Man, so was it hard getting the scaling routines to work? "Nah, we just used the same programmer!"

PROJECT
PAGE MASTER

PUBLISHER
SEGA

INITIATED
OCTOBER '93

RELEASE
NOVEMBER '94

FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

DEVELOPERS
PROBE



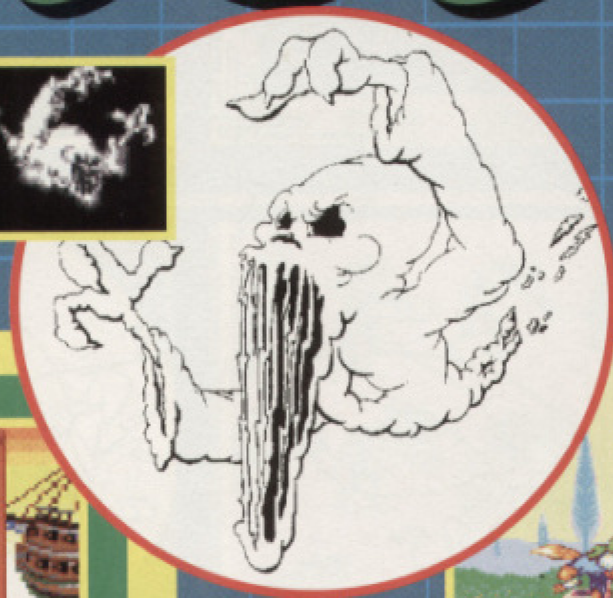


▲ *Out of my way you little sprite!*

Master



▲ *How the animation sequence of the mist monster evolves.*



▲ *An early sketch of a horror sprite.*









▲ *Express yourself in music and movement.*

FRIENDS WILL BE FRIENDS

Macca's journey into a land dominated by cartoons meant that Probe weren't restricted by what could be in the game. "During the course of the film," said development manager Tony Beckwith, "Mac finds himself in worlds based on horror, fantasy, and adventure. Each of these features a friend for Mac to ally himself with. For instance, Horror is a hunch-backed coward who wants everyone to like him, whilst Fantasy is this really sassy fairy, and Adventure is a real swash-buckling type." So how does the game progress from world to world?

"In the film, the Richard character must find a library ticket within each area in order to make it to the next. The whole film is set within the original library location, with Mac moving from scene to scene trying to get out via the book which acts as an exit, hopefully taking his mates with him. As he progresses he gradually gains the courage he's never had, so he should emerge less of a coward."

The game's design was pretty much set out in concrete. "We always wanted to write it as a platformer," Tony elaborates, "and the many locations in the game and the plot-line of finding the ticket just fell into place perfectly, as did using an open book as an exit. All we did then was break the three worlds into 12 smaller sub-levels, using key locations within each as the backdrop."

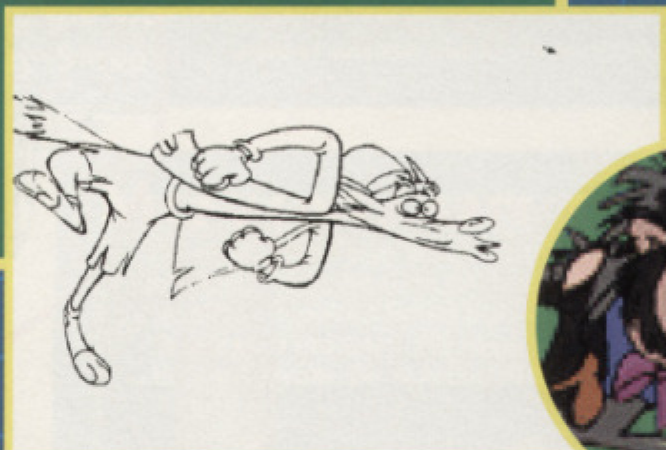
ALWAYS USEFUL

Richard's quest brings him into contact with all manner of strange level-related baddies and, initially, our hero's only means of getting even is to jump on them in the traditional manner. Needless to say, though, there are a number of a useful goodies awaiting collection to make our hero's task easier, and these range from magic shoes which make him run faster and allow him to springboard of walls to reach higher levels, glue hands for sticking to surfaces, and a host of weapons — including eyeballs to throw and a sword to poke people with.



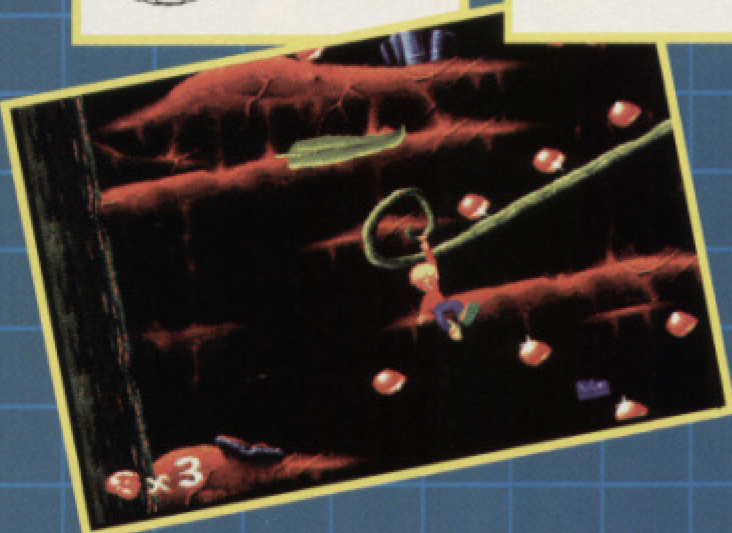






▲ *A familiar fairytale character from the Three Pigs story.*







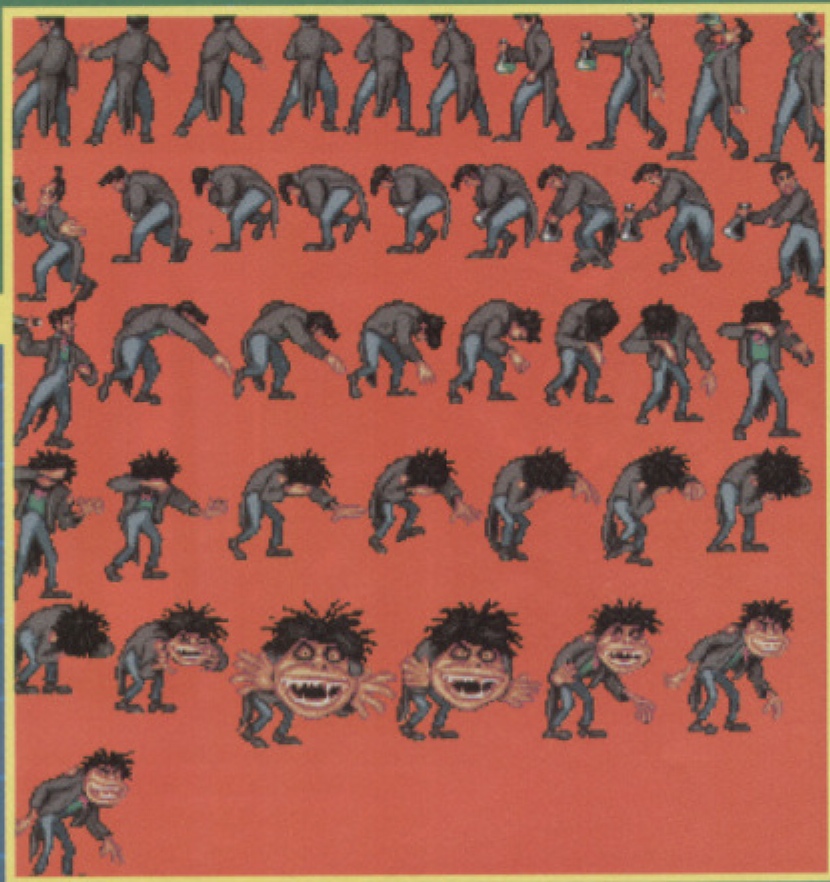


TICKET TO RIDE

Starting in Horror World, Macca meets up with his hunchbacked ally and eventually moves on to Fantasy World and then Adventure. Each world is accessed via a map screen, with the player entering each stage in the order they appear. The worlds within each are based on three different graphical themes, with the objects altering slightly within each. The basic aim of the game is to find a predetermined selection of objects before making your way to the exit. However, the quest differs from level to level, with some depending on a specific number of objects being collected or needing a library ticket to exit.

FOLLOW THE GOLDEN BRICK LANE...

As Macca legs it from book to book, he encounters characters from an assortment of nursery rhymes and childrens' classics. Lilliputians from Gulliver's Travels leap out from Pan's pipes, Long John Silver makes an appearance, as do Doctor Jeckyll and Mr Hyde, and there's even a 'Golden Brick Lane' which has nothing to do with the yellow one in The Wizard Of Oz, of course! "The enemy sprites are identical in movement to those of the film," offers Tony. "The Macaulay sprite itself uses over 2000 frames of animation, and the rest have been copied and animated from the sheets we've had for reference from Fox themselves." In terms of research materials, Fox have helped Probe throughout the game's lengthy development, and the game's ten animators have had numerous videos of the film's action as and when they became available. "They've been really great," Tony affirms, "they even let us adapt some of their characters and add a few of our own to the game. They realised that we somehow had to make a game from their story, so were fairly easy-going."



▼ *Little Richard makes an athletic move.*









▲ *All the king's horses and all the king's men...*

▶ *Even the enemy sprites have character.*











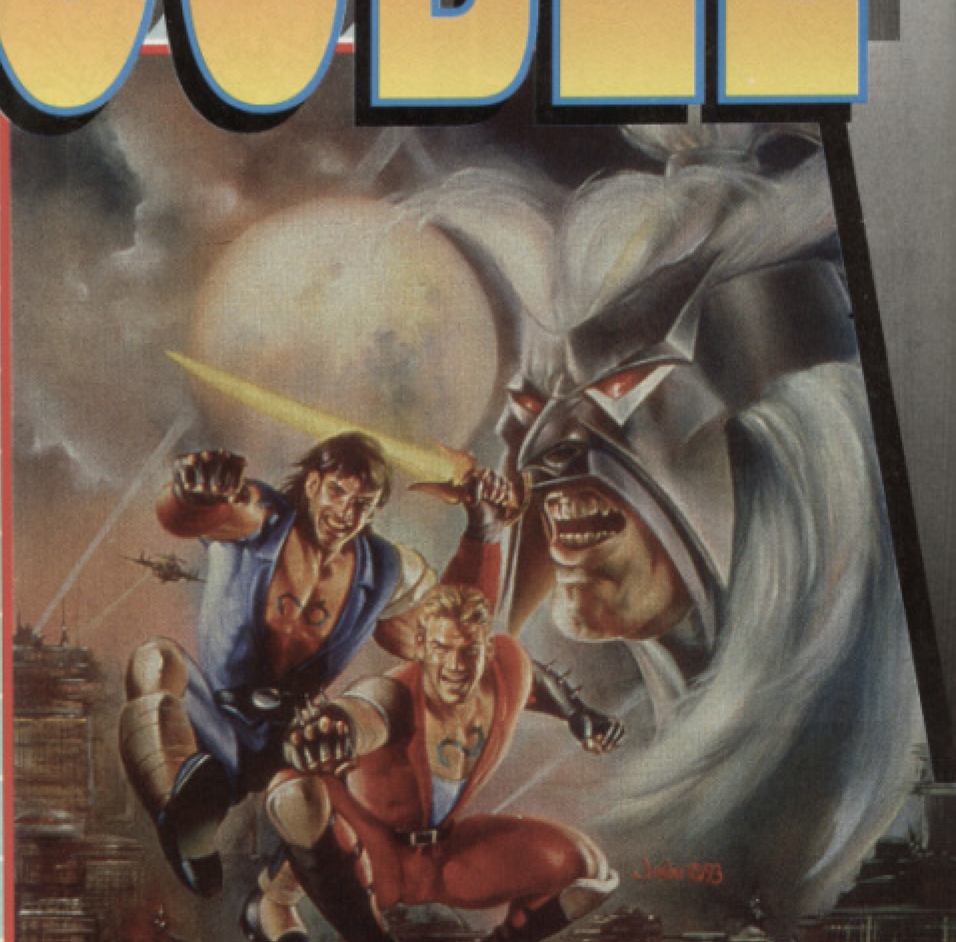
▶ *One of the first bosses to be programmed, and spookily cinematic.*



Williams' Double Dragon series is one of the big grossers in the game market — $350m in previous sales, and games over almost every format. The phenomenon hit the Megadrive on instalment two, part three arrived last year and now part, er, five is up for preview. So what happened to four? We may put that in 'Great Unanswered Questions' in the future, but at the moment, five, 'V, or 'Oh no not more of the same old scrotums', is the matter in hand.



DOUBLE V



Double Dragon V differs from its walk 'n' thump predecessors by being a Streetfighter-esque one-on-one beat 'em up. It also ties in neatly with a new Double Dragon movie that was filmed last year, and is due for imminent release in the States, reaching these shores around Christmas.

Developed by Tradewest, he game uses the same characters as the film, and the same setting: a brooding Los Angeles in 2007. The city has been devastated by the 'Mother of all Earthquakes', and as a result the populace are a bit on the stroppy side; looting, assaulting and pillaging type behaviour.

Enter the convenient legend of the Double Dragon amulet, a mystical medallion created by a King of ancient China, who sacrificed himself to imbue it with the power that would rescue his embattled nation. Predictably, this little piece of dynamite now stands within the grasp of both good and evil, and the shape of the future depends on how you conduct yourself in the proceeding rumbles.

In the game's story mode, you play one of the three goodies, Billy and Jimmy Lee, or their pal, Blade. The heroes are set upon by the 'colourful street gangs' each with their distinct mode of dress and behaviour. You face the welcoming party in twelve different techno-wreck city locations. Alternatively, you can forgot all the storyline faff and just slug it out with a mate within the tournament option.

▼ Lindi fights Isla in the great battle of the St. Clairs.













▲ *They've still to flesh this character out a bit (groan).*

DRAGON

DATELINE...2007



It is planned for each of the 12 characters to have four to six special moves of their own, as well as standard moves using the six-button joypad. At the moment the game is 16MEG, and it's expected Sony will keep it at that in order to offer Double Dragon V at a reasonable cost. The emphasis is on the individuality of each of the characters, so they have a profile, with superfluous details of the favourite and least favourite things. Presently, only eight of the characters are coded for play, but sketches of the others show further ideas. Of those who have profiles:





BILLY LEE: Likes milk and dislikes the Shadow Master. Native to Metro City and a ripe old 38 years of age!





JIMMY LEE: Billy's twin, but with a completely different look. Both brothers use the mystic 'Art of Dragon' fighting technique.





ICEPICK: One of the Shadow Master's hordes, a freeze-meister, with a heart colder than a pack of Birdseye frozen peas. He uses Icekido fighting moves.





SHADOW MASTER: He's very old, knows the secret rights of Shadow Fighting and hates Daytime TV (I'm beginning to like this guy).

PROJECT
DOUBLE DRAGON V

PUBLISHER
SONY

INITIATED
AUTUMN '93

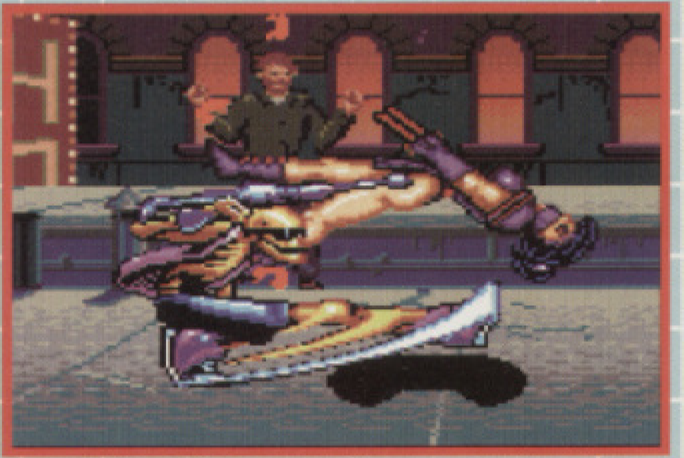
RELEASE
JANUARY '95

FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

DEVELOPERS
TRADEWEST

DOUBLE DRAGON V

I LIKE TO MOVE IT



▲ Find a use for some of those Michael Jackson dance steps.



▲ I am not Chun Li! This is not a Spinning Bird Kick!

Most of the moves are already in place, with each character's fighting style matching their appearance. The Bones character, for example, uses a rifle to extend the range of his kicks and punches. The special moves are also in place, and some look very similar to equivalents in other beat 'em ups. It's impossible to miss the similarity between Sekka's Propeller Kick and Chun Li's Spinning Bird Kick. Specials are performed in the same multiple joypad combinations used by other combat games.

GAME OF A FILM OF A GAME...



▲ Much ripping off of shirts and manly fisticuffs in the movie.

This game is a conversion of the Double Dragon film which was based on the original game... etc etc. Anyway, last summer Lucy Hickman had the utter jaminess of being invited over to Hollywood to visit the Double Dragon film set. There she chatted to all the stars including the arch-baddy Koga Shuko AKA Robert Patrick (better known as the Terminator in T2). Here's her report...



The film follows the story of Billy and Jimmy Lee struggling to survive in terrifying New Angeles in 2007. The empire is ruled by the evil Koga Shuko (Patrick) who kills Jimmy when he refuses to join his organisation. Billy swears revenge and with the help of the beautiful Marion, infiltrates the dictator's HQ. But Marion gets kidnapped (quelle surprise) and Billy finds Shuko has taken over his brother's body so the twins are ultimately pitted against each other in a desperate battle of good versus evil.

Patrick's role as the megalomaniacal Koga Shuko is something he relishes. He said: "This guy's so vain and such a total megalomaniac, just a power-hungry guy. He's got a destiny and he's got to fulfil it and what he's doing is right. He's a fun guy to play for that reason. You can kinda get into his character and play around and have fun but I don't have to take it too seriously."

Patrick has never actually played the Double Dragon game but he does have the T2 arcade machine of in his house. "That game was delivered to me the day the riots started in LA. It was surreal. Damn TV is going and they're burning down the city and there's me and my wife and all my friends at my place playing this machine. It was a riot."

Patrick's face became known all over the world after Terminator 2 so what was it like being Mr Machine man? He said: "T2 was challenging in its own right too. You got to shut down, act really cold and make like a machine. The hardest part is making yourself believe it. Once I believed it, it became a reality to me. I would walk around the streets of Hollywood late at night dressed as the Terminator. It's a neat feeling. That's the great thing about acting. When you can believe that you're really this thing and then go out in real life and pull it off , when you know people are looking at you weird, that's kind of fun."

And finally, what was the big man himself, Arnold Schwarzenegger like? "He's a great guy, he's wonderful. He's always there, he gives a hundred percent friendly whenever you see him, that kind of thing, he really is truly greater than life."

Double Dragon: The Movie is set to appear on our screens later this year.



YOU WON'T SEE ME WITH SPOTS.





Getting spots was no big deal. But given the choice, I can live without them.

It's been a while since I've had one. Nowadays I use Oxy* Clean Facial Wash.

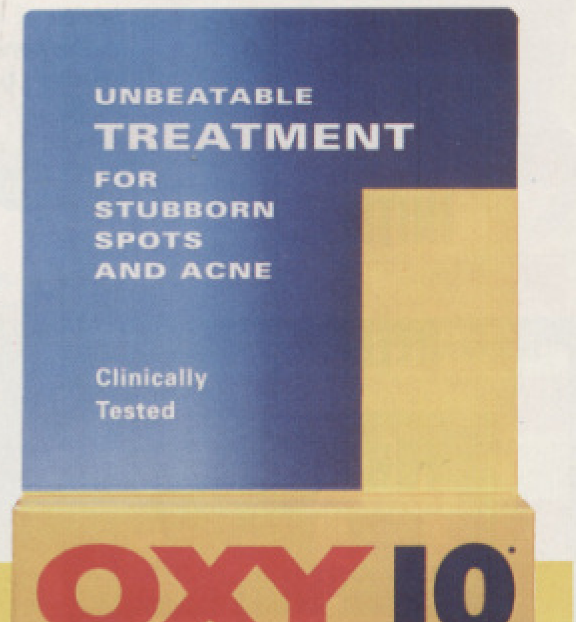
Twice a day, morning and night – no more soap and water for me.

First, I wet my hands and clean them thoroughly with Oxy Clean Facial Wash. Then I lather up some more and rub it all over my face before rinsing it off.

That's it. That's all you need to know about how to get clean, healthy skin. And how to keep it that way.

Of course, even when I'm really careful a persistent spot can slip through the net. And if one does, I just use some Oxy 10. But I hardly ever have to.

HARDLY EVER.



Always read the label. Oxy 10 contains Benzoyl Peroxide. * OXY and OXYCUTE 'EM are trademarks.

OXYCUTE 'EM!*

JELLY BOY

"Mister Soooooaaaaaaft, why is the woooorld you'rrre living in is soooow straaaaaynge?" What a classic ad song that is. Thankfully, it vaguely ties in with the new Ocean platformer Steve went to see. Vaguely.



PROJECT
JELLY BOY

PUBLISHER
OCEAN

INITIATED
APRIL '92

RELEASE
DECEMBERT '94

FORMAT
MEGADRIVE

DEVELOPERS
PROBE

If the star of Probe's new platformer was a TV star, he would be the Megadrive equivalent to One Foot In The Grave's Richard Wilson. For years both Jelly Boy and Mr Wilson have been hovering around the edge of fame, but whilst Richard Wilson found fame as Victor Meldrew, Jelly Boy was left to wallow in obscurity.

MEAN MACHINES first met up with the little pink hero two years ago when Steve went to see how the original Mortal Kombat was shaping up, and the pair kept in touch ever since. During that time, Jelly Boy was set to appear under the EA banner, Sony had an interest — he was even touted as a possible game tie-in for Rowntrees, the people who make Jelly Babies, and, even worse, as a Mr Blobby game! Thankfully, he was saved this fate worse than death, and after these plentiful flirtations with virtually every software house imaginable, the Megadrive version will now be released through Ocean as one of their first forays into the Sega market.

Why the fuss about what, to all intents and purposes looks like just another platformer? Because it's not, that's why. Jelly Boy is a massive, seven-world epic with our rubbery hero morphing into a series of weapons as he fights off a selection of extremely odd bad guys. Now, as the little wobbly wonder prepares to take his first faltering steps into the Megadrive world, it was only right that we were there to meet him. We're good like that...

SKY WORLD



The sun is shining, the sky is blue, and there goes Jelly passing through...





▲ *Please, no Led Zep jokes, please.*



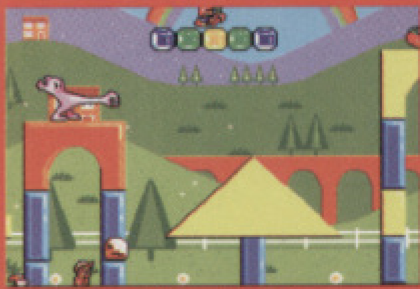
◀ *Mmm, I want to get hold of your big juicy apples.*

DESERT WORLD



Sand dancers, pyramids and mummies galore — all that's missing is Christopher Lee.

TOY WORLD



Ten-ton teddies, AWOL toy soldiers and more lego bricks than a thousand toddlers' bedrooms.

MOON WORLD



Space: the not-so final frontier. Home to a wealth of aliens Doctor Who would be proud of.

LEVEL 2: MENSWEAR... GOING DOWN!

Swirley's Sweet Factory is unlike anything even Willy Wonka could create. Spanning seven entire worlds, and split into a series of smaller sub-stages, Swirley's makes Buckingham Palace look like a caravanette. Jelly begins the game standing on a sprawling isometric map which is punctuated by a series of holes which act as the entry port to each. "We've got a land based on toys in there," offers Jo, "and this is followed by ones based on ice, space, desert, the sky, and an Aztec period. There's also an underwater scene, and that leads on to the final confrontation with the grandaddy of all bosses." As can be expected, the sweet factory is infested with all manner of strange beasties, and these tie in with the level's graphical themes, with snowmen inhabiting the ice world, assorted toys in the first, and all manner of aliens in outer space. "We've also tried to add a bit of humour to them," Jo expands, "so there are nasties who'll pick up others and chase you with them, and ones who don't look too dangerous but can cause real grief."



AZTEC WORLD



Deep jungles and deadly insects await Jally's arrival — and imminent departure.

SNOW WORLD



Ice, ice baby. Colder than a Mivvi factory, and deadlier than a bath full of killer penguins.



▲ *You can sing for your big juicy apple.*



▶ *It's the wall game! (ancient kids' show starring Sinnita)*

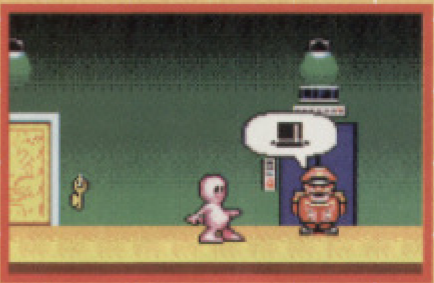
MORPH THAN WORDS CAN SAY

Thanks to his jelly-based composition, our rotund pink hero adapts his body to suit the surroundings. Scattered around the play area are numerous pink icons. When collected, Jelly duly assumes their shape, allowing him to morph into all manner of shapes, including hammers, hot-air balloons and a smaller version of himself. "Originally, we were aiming for 35 morphs," says Jelly Boy's creator Jo Bonar, "but they were very memory intensive and some were basically clones of earlier ideas. In the end, we trimmed them down to 27, including submarines, skateboards and pogo sticks." As soon as Jelly has collected such an object a small countdown materialises around his head indicating the lifespan of the power-up. However, should Jelly bump into one of his many foes, the object is lost instantly. "Any lost items are reset immediately, but it can often prove fatal," continues Jo. "For instance, there's a scene where Jelly Boy is a helicopter in a scrolling shoot 'em up sub-game, and if he doesn't reach the end of a level before the countdown expires, a life is lost."



▲ *And Jelly Boy came across a magical castle. We think.*







JELLY GOOD SHOW

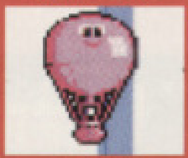
MEAN MACHINES has had a long and eventful life which, through the years, has brought us into contact with some of the weirdest scenarios ever. We've had blue hedgehogs with attitude, clusters of balls fighting each other, and we're about to encounter a time-travelling Dolphin. Jelly Boy, however, has the most intricate scenario ever. "Originally, the game was going to be set within a theatre," says Probe's chief tester, Tim Bradstock, "and Jelly was going to make his way through a series of plays and behind the scenes of each. But the game's changed so much since then, that sort of fell by the wayside." Instead, the story starts in Swirley's Sweet emporium with a big vat of jelly being hit by lightning and giving life to our glutinous hero — a Rowntree's equivalent of Frankenstein! Anyway, to cut a long story short, Jelly Boy wants to escape the strange sweet shop, but needs access to a special lift. To gain access, six special objects must be collected and given to the lift operator. Why the lift operator wants a selection of spinning tops and the like we'll never know, but someone at Probe obviously plans to be the next Enid Blyton!



MUMMY WOW! I'M A BIG BOY NOW!

During his quest, Jelly must locate eight pieces of a jigsaw puzzle from each world which are exchanged for one of the objects the lift operator needs. Naturally, there are hordes of nasties out to prevent Jelly's escape, but with a repertoire of some 27 moves he's more than adequately armed — including additional help from his pet Jelly Dog (who was based on the programmer's own pooch). The list of morphs is seemingly endless, but here's a selection of some of the more impressive:

BALLOON



FLOAT

HAMMER



BASH OBSTACLES

POGO STICK



JUMP HIGH

SKATEBOARD



MOVE FASTER

TINY JELLY



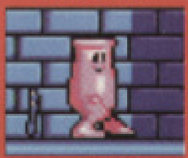
GET THROUGH GAPS

UMBRELLA



BREAK FALL

CANNON



BOOM!

SPACE ROCKET



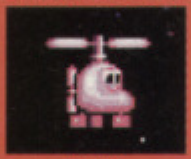
ERM...

SUCKER BALL



WALK ON WALLS

JELLYCOPTER



FLY

SKIIER



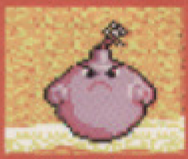
GUESS!

SKATER



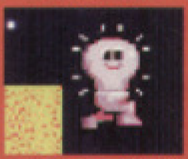
GOOD ON ICE

BOMB



BLOWS UP

LIGHT BULB



LIGHTS DARK ROOM

POP BOTTLE



MINI CANNON



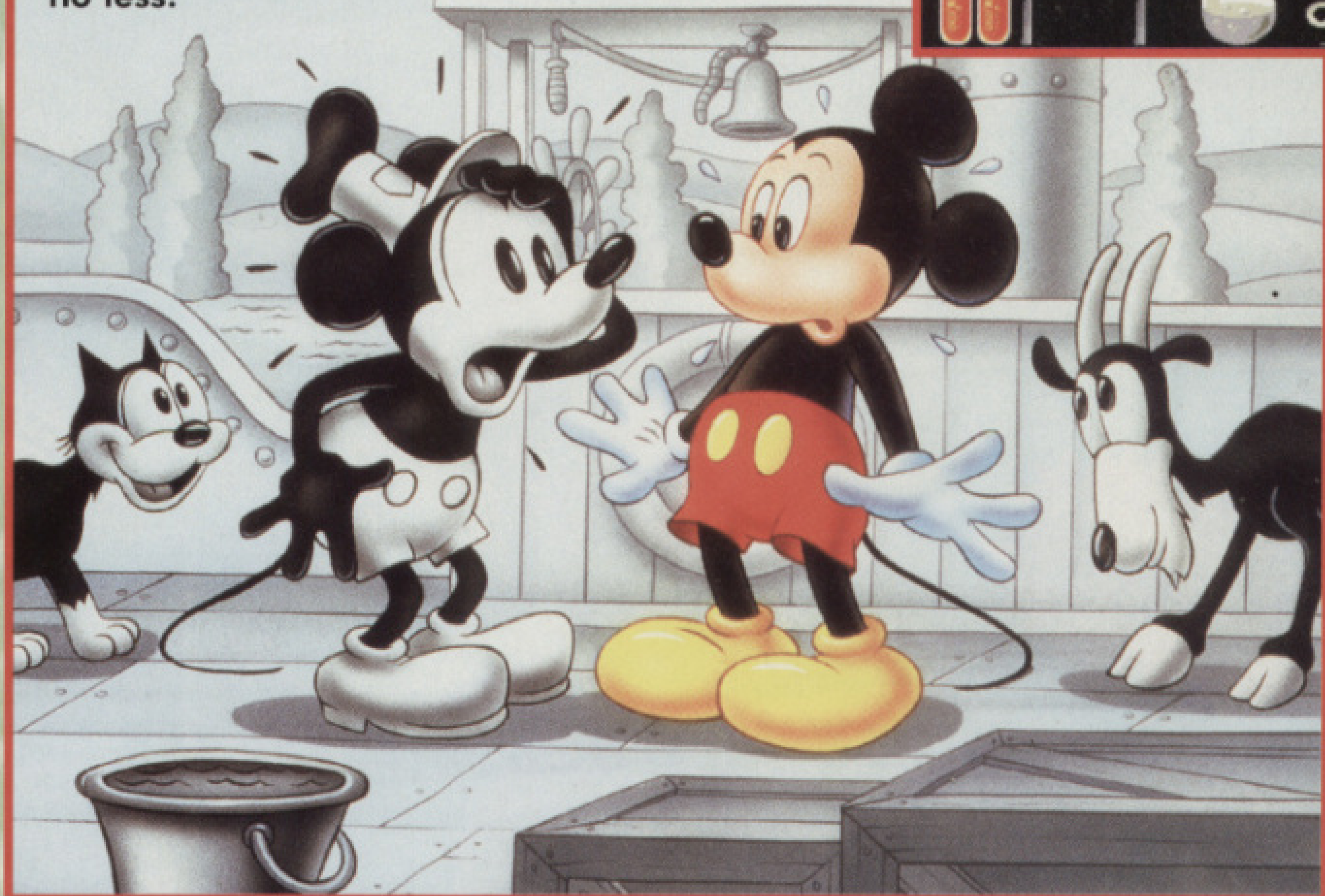
md-6
md-3
MD6 — 6 Button Joypad Independent Auto and Turbo Fire
MD3 — 3 Button Joypad — Independent Auto and Turbo Fire
Multiplayer Adaptor— Up to 5 player action on multi player games for SNES
GAMESTER SN8 JOYPAD FOR SUPER NES
GAMESTER MD6 JOYPAD FOR MEGADRIVE
SN6 — 6 Button Joypad
Two Extra Buttons for Arcade Style Play
sn-8
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SN8 — 6 Button Joypad Independent Auto and Turbo Fire
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PREVIEWS

MICKEY

Oh, Mickey you're so fine, you're so fine, you've blown my mind! Hey Mickey! Hey Mickey! Not actually an ode to the great mouse Methuselah, arch-mascot of Disney corp, Über rodent and star of countless (count 'em) video games, but it nonetheless typifies the continuing enthusiasm of his following. Now Sony are ready to unleash another manic Megadrive Mickey extravaganza, his 'Timeless Adventures' no less.









MANIA



▲ *First floor: haberdashery, ladies ready to wear, undead, going up...*



PLAYERS	1
MEG	16
RELEASE	NOVEMBER
BY	SONY
PRICE	TBA
GAME TYPE	PLATFORM
PERCENT COMPLETE	

Despite the many pretenders who have tried to displace him, Mickey Mouse's position as first and greatest cartoon hero is unassailable. The integral relationship between himself and Disney is unique in the entertainment media, unparalleled perhaps, until a certain Japanese corporation linked its destiny inextricably with that of a small hedgehog.

Before then by comparison, Mickey had been looking a little jaded. Like all great movie stars, he had become a bit of a recluse, taking few roles and his public were perhaps beginning to forget him. But the new media of video games presented him with fresh opportunities, and Mickey rose to them with aplomb (a bit like Joan Crawford gamely doing TV soaps after the Oscars dried up).

And Mickey has an advantage over those whippersnapper rivals. He has a legacy, he has a history, and part of that history are some of the greatest and most innovative cartoon shorts of all time. Having been brought up on a diet of Deputy Dawg, Tom and Jerry, Sylvester and Tweety ad infinitum intravenous cartoonery, we fail to appreciate the impact that early shorts like Steamboat Willy would have had on audiences well over half a century ago. At that time Mickey was the cutting edge.

Now that Mickey has been 'pensioned off' (this is his 66th year) it's time for that contribution to be recognised in tribute form, which is probably the best way of interpreting Mickey Mania. It's a playable nostalgia trip through his career highlights, and befitting his adventurous character, the game seems to attempt some innovative effects previously unseen on a Megadrive. For Mickey, no expense has been spared.



▶ *From 'The Lonesome Ghosts', a sanguine sequence.*

GOOD TRADITION

Mickey Mania falls into the long tradition of platform games on the Megadrive, but its looks, design and attention to detail put it in a higher bracket than some of the monstrosities we've seen pass by this year. That goes without saying, even before the game is ready to for a complete review. The standard of animation is particularly high, with thousands of frames expended on characters like Pluto, and the bosses (another high tradition of platforming respected here). Other 'little touches' show the evolution of colour in the early cartoons, hairlines across the 'film' of Steamboat Willy, and numerous cameo appearances.

CHAPTER AND VERSE

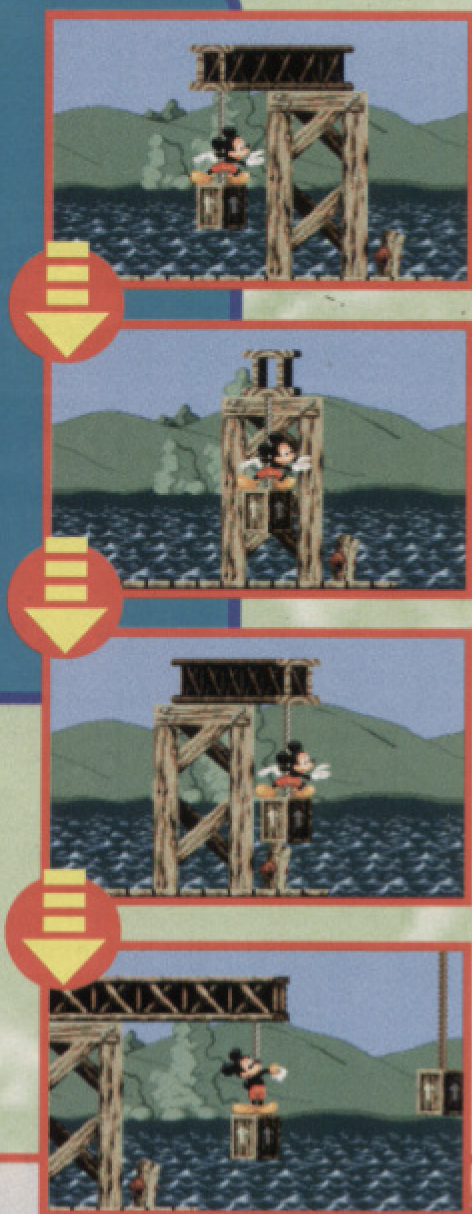
The game is designed around six celluloid chapters in the Great One's career. Naturally we start with the first episode, 'Steamboat Willy' from way back in 1928 (November 18th, calendar fans). The next three chapters all come from the halcyon period of cartoon shorts in the Thirties; 'The Mad Doctor' (1933), 'Moose Hunters' (1937) and 'The Lonesome Ghosts' (1937). The final two chapters cover a well-loved Jack and the Beanstalk excerpt from 'Fun and Fancy Free' (1947) and one of Mickey's most recent outings, a version of Hans Christian Andersen's 'The Prince and the Pauper' from 1990. The aim in each one is to locate the Mickey character in each with your own Mickey and lead him to safety. At the outset of each episode, an unseen illustrator sketches a little introductory vignette.

At several points throughout the game you notice effects where the programmers have forced the Megadrive to work beyond its predictable spec. Many of these moments are cosmetic, but not to be unfair, some like the Moose hunt section are actually part of the gameplay. Highlights include:



DEPTH

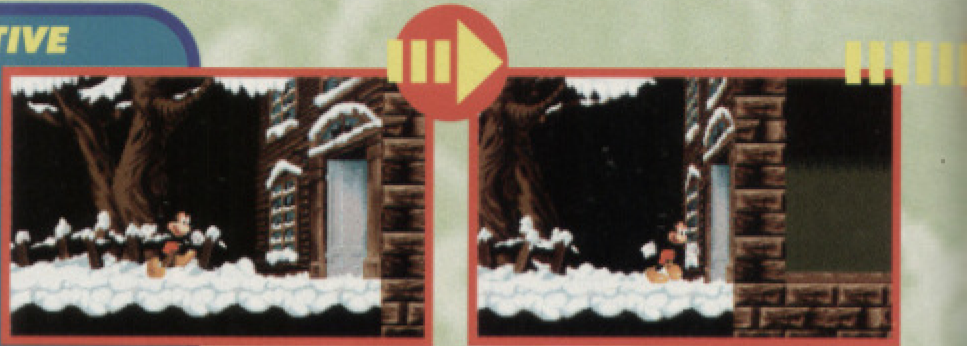
Mickey hitches a ride on a crane, and you can't but notice how it changes perspective fluidly, appearing to swing in front of the screen.



▲ *A fantastic little moment of motion.*

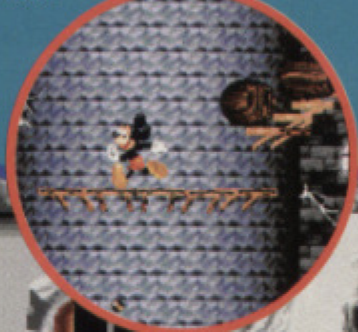
PERSPECTIVE

Cartoon two starts in the open, with the cross-section of the Mad Doctor's castle. It can only be described as cool the way the castle perspective changes as you enter.



ROTATION

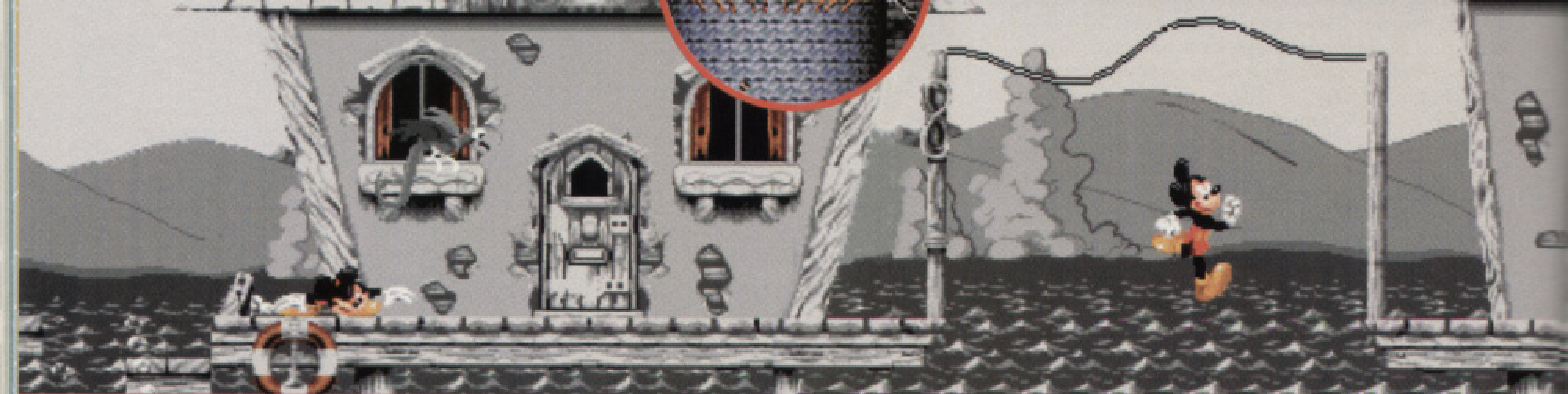
One of the Mad Doctor sequences resembles an old NES game called Castelian, where the player mounted the platforms of a rotating tower. It's so well accomplished here, the scrolling should get the Heineken bar steward award for smoothness.



3D

Probably the most impressive, the Megadrive indulges in some 3D scrolling which Super NES writers glibly dub 'Mode 7'. Mickey dashes outwards, pursued by a rampant moose, in quite the most steeplechasey of current Megadrive pursuits.







OBJECTIVITY

In Mickey Mania Travellers Tales show the same affinity for puzzle-based gameplay that made their own previous creation Puggsy so enjoyable. The basis of the 'real' object system is that on-screen objects react in a natural and physical way. There are plenty of instances in Mickey Mania where objects can be pushed, swung or tilted to achieve a result. At one point, Mickey topples a series of jars that fall delightfully. In another section he has to swing across a hall on chandeliers, rocking them to gather momentum for each leap. In 'Lonesome Ghosts' a series of pivoting platforms require their own techniques to cross.

As well as objects, there are puzzles. Mostly these are simple, but often subtle. From the first chapter, where bells must be rung, through the chemical experiment in the mad doctor's lab, the brain must be engaged. Some problems might not even make themselves apparent, but solutions do. In the moose hunt section, keeping an eye on your canine companion makes avoiding the charging animal less tricky.



▲ Stargazers will be watching Pluto to prophesy future events.

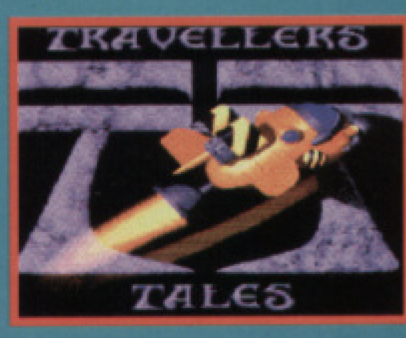
THERE LIES A TALE

Mickey Mania has been developed by Travellers Tales, a programming team who have worked closely with Sony and its sister company Psygnosis on previous platform projects like Shadow of the Beast, the unfortunate Dracula Megadrive game and Puggsy. Although Mickey is looking suitably Disney-esque, it also bears the ornate background and large sprite hallmarks of the developers.

Steve Riding, the Producer of the project explained how Travellers Tales provided all the sample code when Sony bid for the license for Mickey 65th birthday game. It was their ability to work to what Steve calls an 'insane' deadline that put their seal on the project. They submitted the original pitch of a birthday tribute through a selection of Mickey's most memorable outings. The original plot, designed by two ex-Sony playtesters, was refined as the game took shape.

Steve confirms Disney's well-known reputation for keeping tight control over their licensees. "Disney insisted that they provided and approved every frame of animation throughout the game, and also put forward their views on music and speech". However this wasn't a problem. "While initially we though that this would be a major pain," admits Riding, "in the end it proved to be a significant contribution to the high standard of the project".

Travellers Tales won't admit to more than a general influence from previous Mickey games, but Steve confesses to admiration for Dave Perry's Aladdin, which he describes as a 'milestone within the computer game industry'. Seeing it as a target he says: "I sincerely believe in Mickey Mania that we have gone one step further. We have huge animations, authentic Mickey speech and the most beautiful backdrops that I have ever seen in a console game". And he's not taking the mickey.





HALO

On Lonesome ghosts, many of the sections take place in semi-darkness, with Mickey swathed in a corona of light. This effect has been used sparingly before, but never as extensively as in Mickey Mania. It's a device used frequently on the Super NES, where it's easier to perform (Witness Ocean's Addams Family).



ECCO II
TIDES OF TIME

When the original Ecco the Dolphin emerged from the depths of Sega last year it sent the MEAN MACHINES crew into a panic — what could they put into the game genre box on the review pages? It was a whole new style of game. What could we call it, a swim 'em up?! And while other inferior products emerging at the same time headed towards a watery grave, Ecco, with its highly atmospheric, utterly original gameplay caused mighty waves with the Megadriving public and became one of Sega's best-selling games ever. Never ones to pass up the chance of milking a good thing, Sega are trying the same again with a sequel — Ecco II: The Tides of Time.

From what we've seen so far, Ecco II looks like being a true sequel, and boasts a whole new storyline and many, many new features. Coders Novotrade have been given a huge 16MEG cart to play around with — twice the size of the original — enabling them to really go to town variety wise on the graphics and gameplay front. In the first adventure Ecco was pretty much confined to the ocean but in this new offering, our smiley chum has defied the laws of science and can not only breathe outside the sea but can take to the skies and fly as well! He's also mastered the art of morphing and regularly changes his shape to one more suitable to his surroundings.

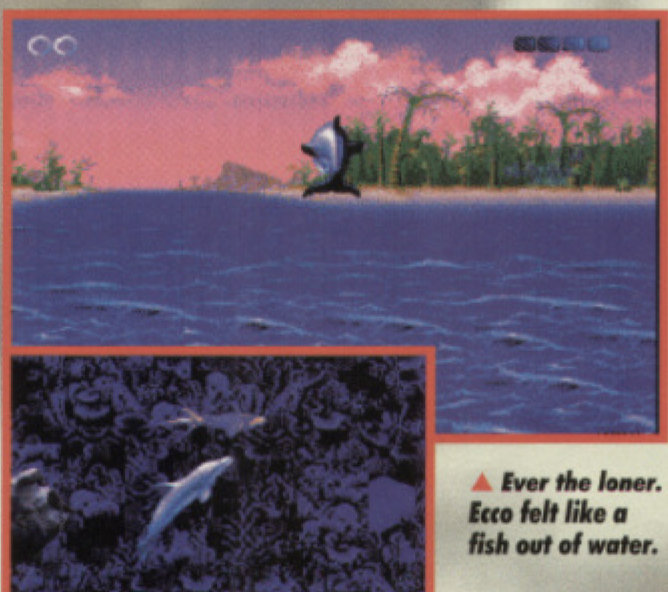
His new powers are courtesy of the storyline which again has Ecco doing good deeds and righting wrongs at the bottom of the sea but this time has him moving forward in time and his new skills are all courtesy of the evolutionary process. Handy, eh? Ecco 2 is looking good so far, and we'll bring you a full review of this one as soon as we can.



▲ *"That's nothing," said crab. "I can do 'em out my bum".*



▲ *When Ecco's mum sees that damage, she'll go loopy.*



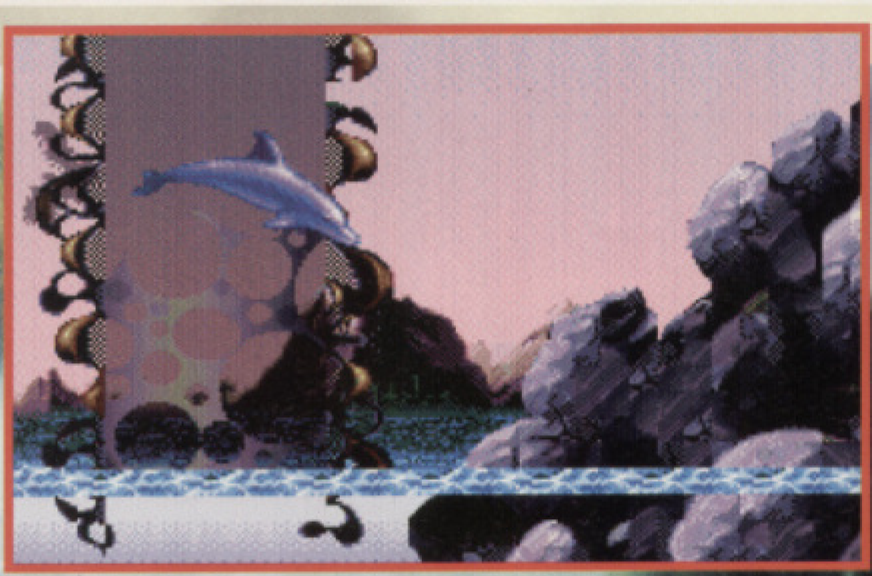
▲ *Ever the loner. Ecco felt like a fish out of water.*

1 PLAYER	RELEASE	OCTOBER
16 MEG	BY	SEGA
	PRICE	TBA
	GAME TYPE	PLATFORM

PERCENT COMPLETE







D-DAY (X3)

Another rather topper feature of the game is the amazing-looking 3D sequences, viewed from directly behind Ecco! One such section involves making Ecco leap through cosmic circles in the air which, when successfully completed, transport him to a new time and space. And it's grab-your-3D-glasses-and-make-your-eyes-hurt time with the intro sequence where 3D's the name (complete with glasses) and where you'll jump back in amazement as a ruddy great dolphin leaps out the screen at you.





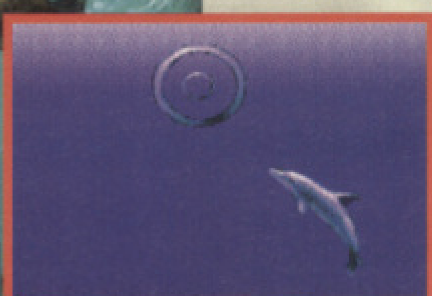
▲ *What wakes an Oyster? Cockle-doodle-doo! I just made that up.*







▲ *"Honestly, I caught a human this big once..."*







WATER SHUTE-ING

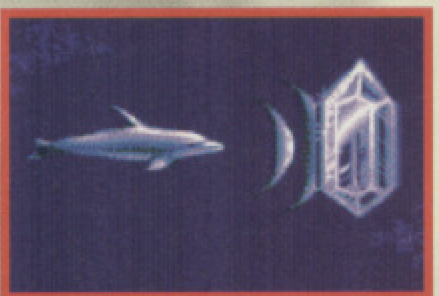
Ecco's last adventure had him singing at his enemies to kill them off. In this sequel, the marvels of modern technology have made him even more tone-deaf and his voice is more powerful than ever. Also, with a freshly-collected four-way voice he can waste anything on the screen with just one line from the Birdy Song.





▲ Now there's something you don't get to see every day.



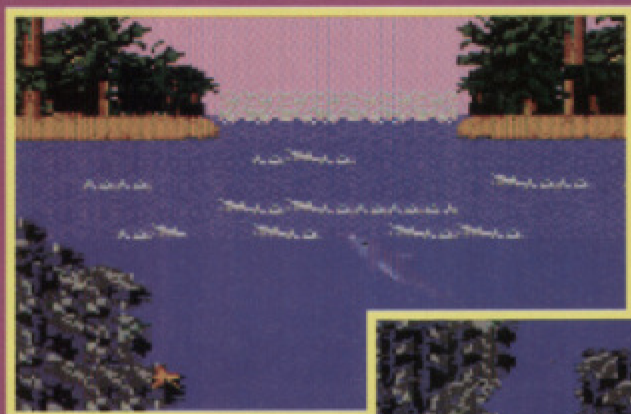




▲ Behind yoooooou! Ecco: The pantomime. Coming soon.

ECCO GEAR

And it's good news for Game Gear owners because The Tides of Time is washing onto their system, too. Also looking right smart, here's a few shots for your delectation. More soon…



▼ Ecco caught whilst pretending to be a hoover.



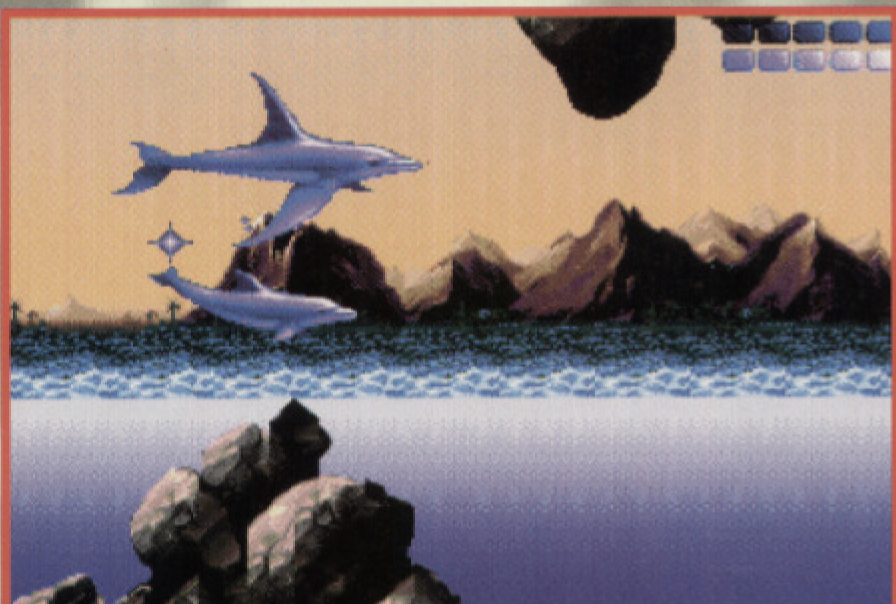
▲ Because he's on a smaller screen, should he become Ecco the Porpoise?



▲ Here we are, wummaging in the undergwoth...



▲ Do you reckon Dolphins laugh at trapped tuna fish as they are let back in the sea whilst the fish are canned?

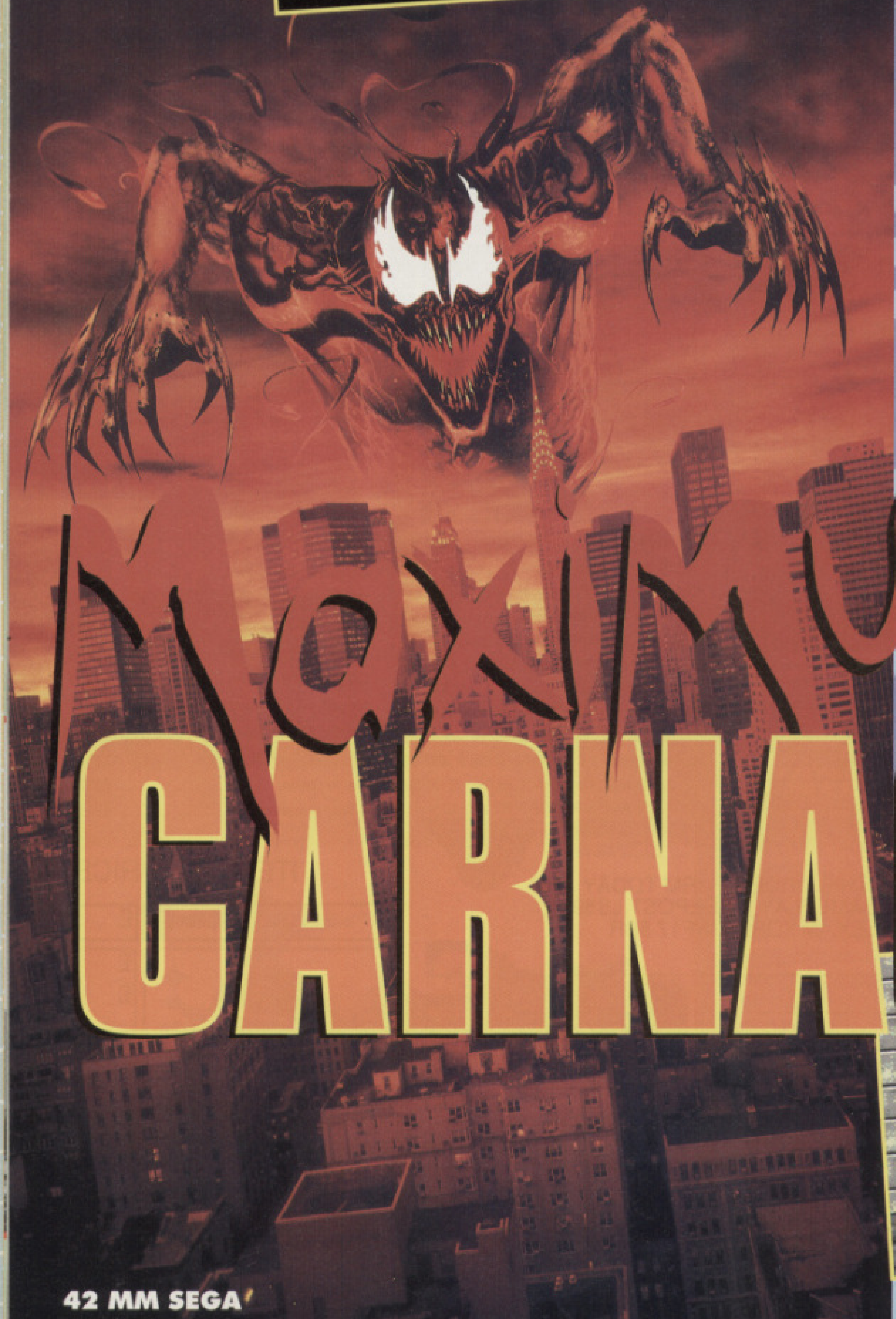


WATERWAY TO HEAVEN

Midway through one of the levels there's a gigantic waterway stretching from the ocean into the skies above. In this vertically-scrolling flying section, you have to keep Ecco within these gravity-defying waterways or he'll fall to his death (imagine being hit by a falling aquatic mammal). This section is extremely tough and requires pixel-perfect timing and some nifty diagonal jumps. Oh, and a bit of help from the dolphin God in dolphin heaven. He who gives fish, and invented dolphin-friendly tuna.







MAXIMUM CARNAGE

When a raving nutter goes round proclaiming he's really a monster, the only sensible thing to do is strap him in a steel strait jacket, lock him up, throw away the key and make sure he doesn't have access to any sharp objects. He's a nutter right? He's a raving loony with no marbles to speak of, a few bricks short of a load and the lights are on but nobody's home. Monsters in civilised society. Pah!

The thing is, the law abiding citizens in this Maximum Carnage game seem to forget that if a man can take on spider-like tendencies and swing around on webs, there's a fair chance that this head case is telling the truth. Unfortunately for them, he is as they discover when he rips open his bonds, sheds his human disguise and reveals himself as carnage, shortly before tearing all their heads off.

Free at last, Carnage goes on a killing campaign the like of which New York City has never seen before (except yesterday and possibly the day before that and last Tuesday and...) anyway, a lot of people die as Carnage seeks out Spiderman, the guy responsible for his captivity on whom he plans terrible revenge (just before causing the end of the world in some deviously dastardly way. Probably).

On his travels he happens upon a beautiful but thoroughly evil feminine fiend — Shriek— and a moronic but exceptionally brutal Spiderman look-alike by the name of Doppelganger who join his forces and go all out to destroy the webbed wonder. You as Spiderman or Venom, together with a little help from your friends must stop them in their murderous tracks.



▲ *Electricity is very dangerous. That was a Public Information film.*





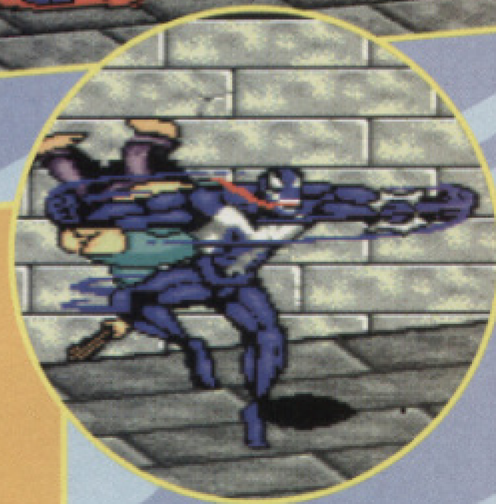
SPIDER SPECIALS

Ol' Spidie has a number of special moves at his disposal as he romps around the streets and rooftops of the Big Apple. As well as the usual wall-climbing and web-spinning antics which transport him up buildings and across the skies, he's also equipped with a number of impressive punches and kicks and general leaping attacks as well as a fab web shield. He can also pick things up and throw them at enemies (including, often, the enemies themselves) and when his punches are powered up enough he comes out with a humungous Power Hit. Whenever he makes a successful attack on a foe it results in a number of annotated cartoon-esque "Ker-thwacks" and "Poks". Make sure when you're on the street you climb all the walls and explore all the nooks and crannies because power-ups and extra lives are often hidden therein.









▲ *Venomous individual.*



THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

Spidie's not alone in his quest for goodness — when he's in dire need, pals such as Captain America, Firestar, Cloak and Dagger whisk him off until he's pulled himself together in a series of between-level animations. And, after passing a certain point in the game, the player gets to choose whether to continue as Spiderman or transform into Venom, a heavyweight superhero who has all Spiderman's web-weaving skills but is ultra strong (not quite so fast though, so beware). On the down side, it's not just Carnage, Shriek and Doppelganger who are after our web-slinger's ass — it seems that all the demons from hell have sprung out of the woodwork to have a bash including the shuddersome likes of Morbius, Deathlok and Demogoblin





▲ *When someone turns up in the same dress, don't you just want to scratch their eyes out?*





1 PLAYERS	RELEASE	NOVEMBER
	BY	ACCLAIM
8 MEG	PRICE	TBA
	GAME TYPE	BEAT 'EM UP

PERCENT COMPLETE

JURASSIC PARK
RAMPAGE EDITION

When the movie of Jurassic Park was released last summer, the whole world seemed to go dino crazy. Anything, it seemed, with a dinosaur on, in, or around it sold. Never one to pass up a good money-spinning opportunity, Sega are now releasing a revamped Megadrive version of their Jurassic Park game, hoping to rake in wads of cash on the back of the of the smash hit movie's video release sometime in October.

Jurassic Park: Rampage Edition is all very much the same sort of thing as the first Megadrive version — a platform shoot 'em up with the player cast as either Dr Alan Grant or a Raptor trying to escape the treacherous undergrowth of Jurassic Park.

As Alan Grant you get to scare **the living daylights** out of everything that crosses your path with a mighty arsenal of weapons which are scattered throughout your journey. There's everything from hand grenades to stasers (with the occasional **thunderball** thrown in for good measure). You are **the man with the golden gun** and your motto is **live and let die** as these geezers — dinosaurs and vicious assassins alike — are after your ass. Similarly, as the Raptor, your **view to a kill** takes the form of chewing your enemies into submission but you'll **never say never again** because this is **for your eyes only** and after all **you only live twice**. Oh yeah, and if those 007 references aren't a big enough clue, the game resembles Domark's James Bond game for the Master System. In fact, if it was any closer it would be asking for a martini shaken and not stirred.

Jurassic Park: Rampage Edition will be lurking in a shop near you around October time — you can be sure we'll be bringing you a full review before then.











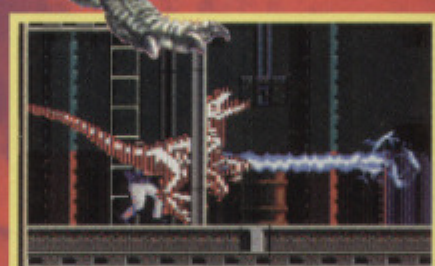
▼ *You are view to a kill of one of the many raptors.*

1 PLAYERS	RELEASE	OCTOBER
8 MEG	BY	SEGA
	PRICE	TBA
	GAME TYPE	SHOOT'EM UP

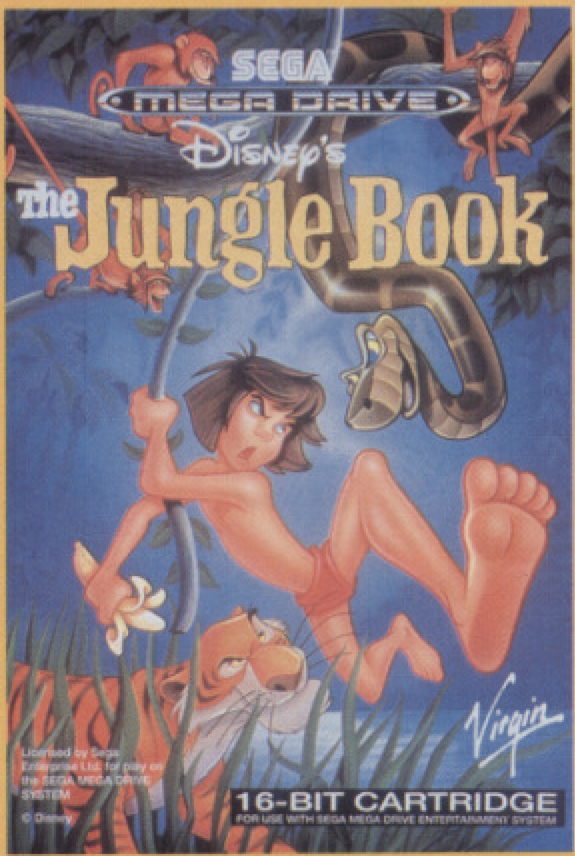
PERCENT COMPLETE

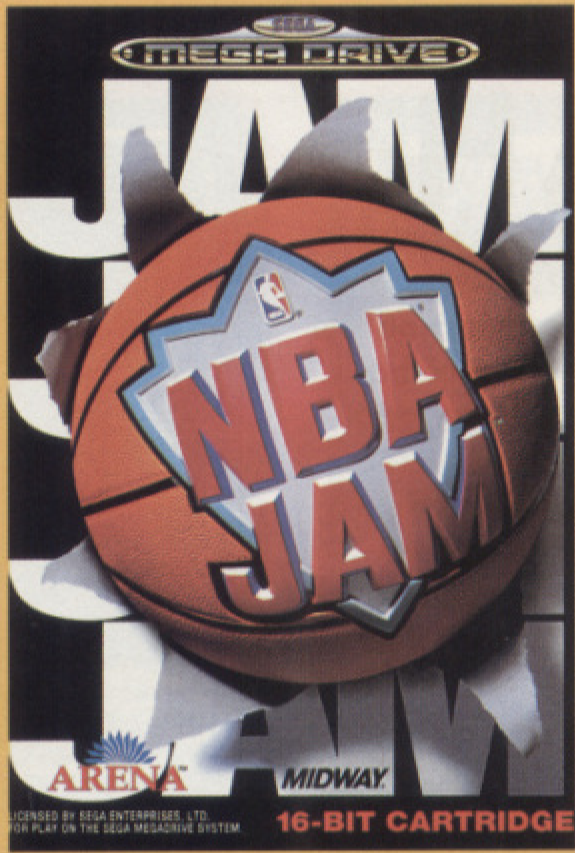
FROM SEGA WITH LOVE

Although the basics of this new version are pretty much the same as those of the first, Sega has used a slightly different game engine. The first game was pretty namby-pamby in that you couldn't kill anything, and you could only shoot foes with a stun gun until they fell asleep. Similarly, the Raptor could only claw victims lightly until they fell over. There's none of that girl's blousery in Rampage, though. Dr Grant has many more weapons at his disposal and far from putting enemies to sleep, he blows them into oblivion in a variety of inventive and gruesome ways. He's also much more versatile and is now able to ride dinosaurs and tackle rope slides and other such tomfoolery. Hurrah!



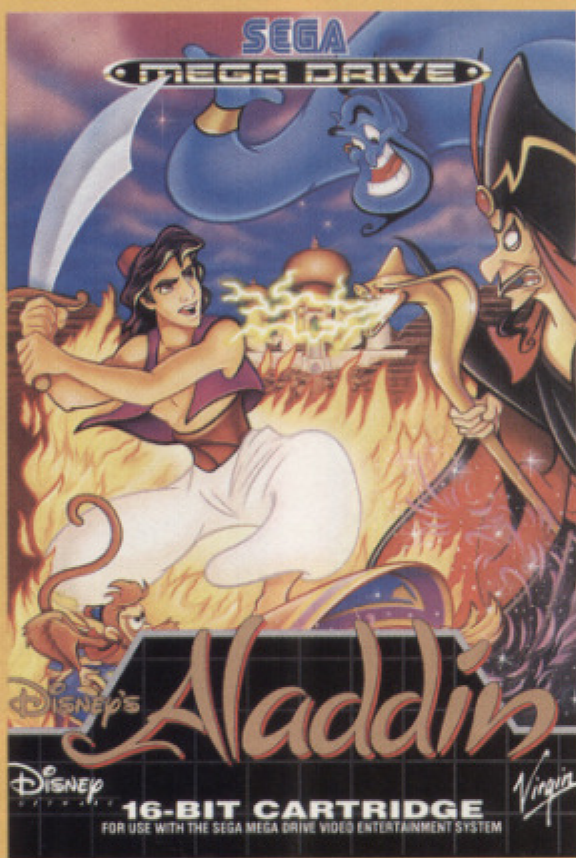














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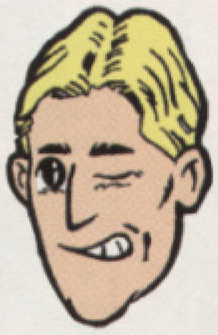
BIG GAME HIRE

BLOCKBUSTER VIDEO

RENT THE LATEST GAMES AT BLOCKBUSTER AND RITZ.

RITZ VIDEO

PAULS TIPS

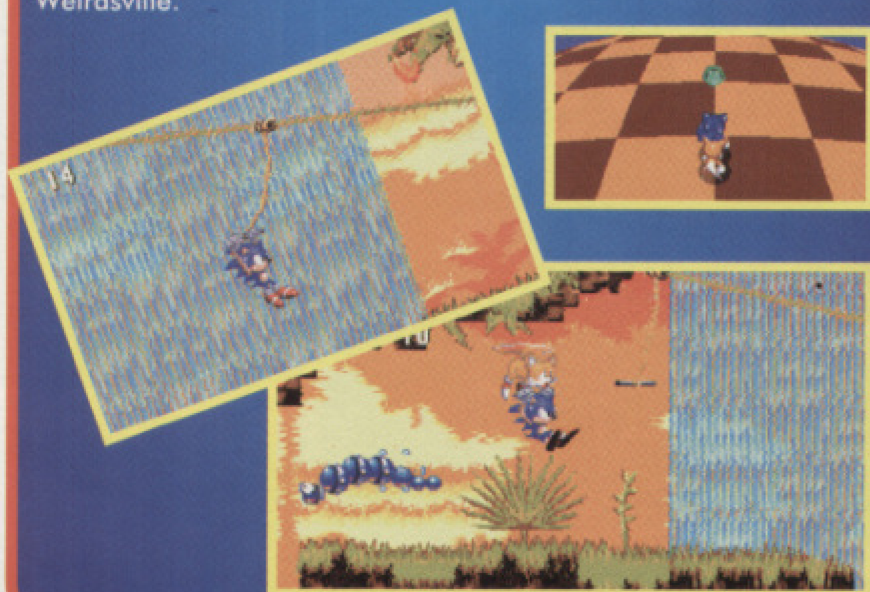


Howdy fellow tipsters, and welcome to this month's out of body instalment of the essential selection of tips and cheats. Due to a bizarre scientific mishap, I am now communicating to you telepathically via the lifeless body once known as Oz Browne. Yes that's right my friends, while busying away in my top secret tips research lab, an overload of tipping excitement blew up the experimental apparatus I was working on, sending me into the fifth dimension. Luckily my loyal assistant Blade placed my spirit form into an empty coke bottle until I can be rematerialised. But fear not my chums, the Mean Team have had a whip round to send me off to America where help lies in the hands of Dr Diablo-Sanchez. There's a bit of a problem, though, as they've only managed to club together sixty-five new pence. Oh, and a felt-tip pen. As for now, my mind control of Oz's body will be my only means of contact with the outside world. Still it's not all bad, in my formless state I have the freedom of the ether to gather a crop of the finest tips and cheats to be found. But before I get the ball rolling, don't forget that you could be the proud owner of a shiny new cart by sending in your top tips and cheats to the following address:TOP OF THE TIPS, MEAN MACHINES SEGA MAGAZINE, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU.

SONIC 3

DANCING SONIC?!

Well this isn't technically a tip or a cheat, but a strange occurrence nevertheless. According to Daniel Lin from Leicester, you can make Sonic breakdance. To witness this strange event use the LEVEL SELECT cheat (MMS Issue 21) then RESET your Megadrive and hold A to activate the DEBUG mode. Go to any level and press A, B, and C and watch Sonic strut his funky thang! Weirdsville.



Oh yes! After the Sampras extravaganza last month, I have the pleasure of bringing you bang up to date with the latest match location codes thanks to Michael Dillon of London.



PINK GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

CHEAT MENU

Remember the intro to the cartoon show? Remember the kid with the ginger hair who was the driver of the Pinkmobile? How on earth did he get his driving license? And how did he reach the pedals? Beats me. But hence forth to the cheat 'lovingly' compiled by the omnipresent team of Mat Miller and Mick Herd from Oldham. Plug in both pads into the Megadrive, switch the little devil on, and hold A and C on pad one and B on pad two. You should hear a crash after the Techmagik logo fades. During the game, if you PAUSE and press C, a cheat menu will materialise. Press LEFT or RIGHT to change the stage, B to make you invincible, and A to restore your health meter. Sadly, the tip doesn't improve the game's playability.



CYBORG JUSTICE

IN-GAME OPTIONS SCREEN

I have the sneaking suspicion that the next cheat was craftily written to me during class. Tut, tut, Chris and Leigh from Buckingham, don't let it happen again. As for the cheat, to access the hidden option screen, make your Cyborg go to the Assembly Room then enter the game as normal. Quickly PAUSE the action and press C, B, B, C, C, A, C, B. If you've been successful the screen will appear as if by magic. On the option table you will find a LEVEL SELECT, CHANGE WEAPON, and INCREASE LIVES. Thanks for that, chaps.



Pete Sampras TENNIS

LATEST LEVEL CODES

ROUND	LOCATION	COURT	OPPONENT	CODE
11	ZURICH	CLAY	D LOVERIDGE	LUCKY
12	MEMPHIS	HARD	F CHANG	HOUSE
13	MILANO	GRASS	P GIOVANI	CUE
14	BARCELONA	CLAY	C YUSTE	DURHAM
15	HAMBURG	CLAY	R ZENGERLE	JUMPING
16	NEW YORK	HAR	G HIMME	HAPPY
17	BERLIN	CLAY	S SCHMIDT	MEGA
18	FLORIDA	HARD	P SAMPRAS	PLAYPETE

Chaos Engine

POWER-UPS AND CASH GALORE!

John Gourley from Glasgow comes up trumps by sending me this little ditty. To transport yourself to the second level as the Thug and Brigand with stacks of moolah, a few lives, and some stonking power-ups, simply enter this password: CHSNGIN12345. Which mysteriously spells Chaos Engine. Bizarre.



MORTAL KOMBAT

MORE REPTILE ANTICS!

And there's more! Julia C. Davy (Miss) from Virginia Water, Surrey quite rightly sets the record straight on the Sub-Zero/Scorpion reptilian features cheat published in Issue 21. According to her there is a far easier way to achieve the same results. Select a character who can get to Reptile (ie. Rayden, Sub-Zero, or Johnny Cage), get the normal double flawless and fatality. When you come to Reptile, lose both rounds. Finally, when the continue box pops up, press START on pad two and all the characters highlighted by pad two will have that scaly old skin.



NBA JAM

SPEECH TEST

Following on from the fabola hidden characters incident of a couple of months back, comes the speech sample test courtesy of Paramdip Guru from Rochester in Kent.

1. Select YES to enter your initials.
2. Enter the first two initials of the following, but hold the cursor over the third and don't enter it.
3. Hold down START and the corresponding button to hear the speech sample.

SPEECH SAMPLE	INITIALS	BUTTON
HELLO	GAP	C
IT'S A BLOW OUT	SNK	C
OH MY	CHR	C
IS IT A TWO?	JAZ	B
BOOMSHAKALAKA	ZOB	B



ANTIQUES SIDE SHOW

It's often the case that carts from a couple of years ago get shoved to one side. In a dark and cold corner they slowly gather dust, fleeting memories of times gone by. But hey! Now's the time to liberate them from the scrapheap and have a good old bash at them with some new cheats.

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

Mark Scales from Martham, Norfolk has picked out a right classic in the guise of Ghouls 'n' Ghosts. For a nifty Level Select, keep pressing UP, DOWN, LEFT, and RIGHT until you hear a 'ding', and you're away. All you need to do is press the following.

LEVEL	BUTTONS
2	UP and START
3	DOWN and START
4	LEFT and START
5	RIGHT and START

What's more, you can jump the first part and start off the second by entering this stuff.

LEVEL	BUTTONS
1	A and START
2	UP, A, and START
3	DOWN, A, and START
4	LEFT, A, and START
5	RIGHT, A, and START

For the very final Boss, Loki, press DOWN/RIGHT and START.

MEGA-CD

FIFA INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

HIDDEN OPTIONS

To commence the celebrations this month, we kick off with one score-cher of a collection of FIFA codes brought to you thanks to an extremely dedicated young man going by the name of Paul Shotton from Stoke-on-Trent. Somehow he managed to get hold of the CD even before it was released in the shops. After playing it to death he faxed me these fabulous new options to increase your enjoyment of this already fab game. To access the new options, simply go to the OPTIONS screen and tap in the following for the following:

SUPER POWER	B, A, B, B, B, B, B, B, B, B.
SUPER OFFENCE	A, A, A, A, A, B, C.
SUPER DEFENCE	B, B, B, B, B, C, B.
DREAM TEAM	A, A, B, B, C, C, A, A,.
SUPER GOALIE	A, A, A, A, A, B, B, B ,B, B, B,.
INVISIBLE WALLS	C, C, C, B, A, A, A, B.
CRAZY BALL	C, A, B, C, C, B, A, C.
CURVE BALL	B, A, C, B, C, C.



MASTER SYSTEM

SPIDERMAN

COSTUME CHANGE

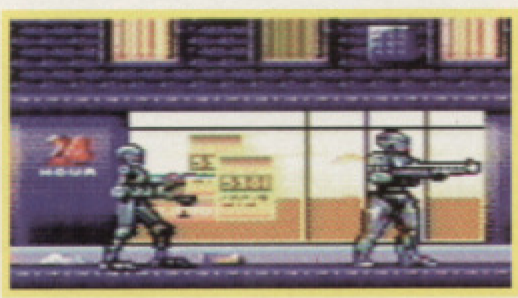
If you're tiring of the standard old blue and cherry red Spidasuit, then why not swap it for one of Venom's really scary looking black all-in-one cozzies. To pick up this costume change go to the pit at the end of the Sewer level where you get the key. Jump under the base of the ladder, and by pressing JUMP and DOWN, so as not to drain your energy, jump out again and you should be clad in a lovely black suit. A word a warning, though, this cheat only works in Nightmare mode. Cheers to William Dixon from Reading for that.

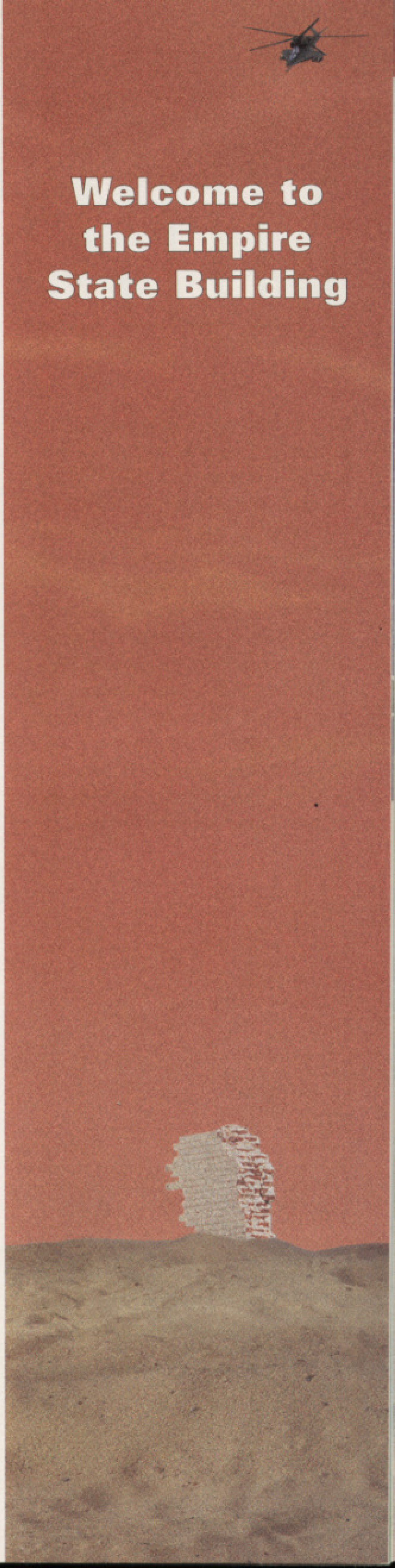
GAME GEAR

ROBOCOP VS TERMINATOR

WARP ZONE

The metal clad duo have become quite an item in the world of Tipstering. Hardly a week goes by without some new location or other being discovered and rushed to me. This month's instalment was penned by Graham Hope from Co. Durham. To get to the Warp Zone you need to find the toxic waste tank next to the step ladder in the Toxic Farm. Stand next to it and press UP. Now in the Secret Room, climb the chain just low enough to climb. Climb it and go right collecting the extra life. Find the three round objects on the ground, stand on one and push UP. And there you go, you're in the Warp Zone.





MORTAL KOMBAT II

After months of waiting, Acclaim's conversion of Mortal Kombat II is finally here — and managed to live up to all the hype surrounding its release. As such, many of you are probably busy twisting your joypads into every conceivable direction in order to pull off the Fatality, Babality and Friendship finishing moves. If you're still struggling, fear not as Steve is here with the definitive list of moves to ensure your foes are well and truly finito. What's more we not only list the moves for the Megadrive game, but next month we'll be printing every Fatality within the brilliant Game Gear version, too...

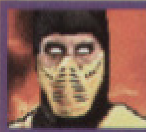
GUIDE TO INSTRUCTIONS

We've abbrieviated the following commands to save on space so we can unveil every move within the game. The codes are as follows:

F - FORWARD
B - BACKWARDS
U - UP
D - DOWN
HP - HIGH PUNCH
LP - LOW PUNCH
HK - HIGH KICK
LK - LOW KICK
BLK - BLOCK

The high and low punch moves only ome into effect when using a six-button pad. Seperate codes are provided for players using three-button controllers. Similarly, when using a six-button pad, you may find it easier to block using the B and Y buttons. Finally, when the instructions use the '+' sign, the last two controls MUST be used simultaneously.
Finally, to knock an opponent into the 'Dead Pool':

THREE-BUTTON: LK + HK WHILST USING UPPERCUT
SIX-BUTTON: LP + LK WHILST USING UPPERCUT



SCORPION

SPECIAL MOVES:

SPEAR: B, B, LP
DECOY: 1/4 CIRCLE AWAY + HP
SCISSOR KICK: 1/2 CIRCLE AWAY + LK
AIR THROW: BLK WHILST BOTH IN AIR

BABALITY



D, B, B + HK

FRIENDSHIP

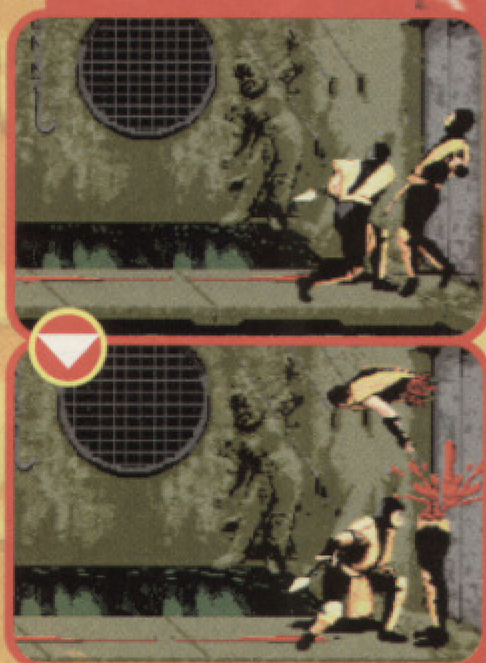


B, B, D + HK

FATALITIES

SPEAR SWIPE

(THREE-BUTTON): HOLD HK. D, F, F, F. RELEASE HK (UP CLOSE)
SPEAR SWIPE (SIX-BUTTON): HOLD HP. D, F, F, F. RELEASE HP (UP CLOSE)



TORCH HIM



(THREE-BUTTON): HOLD BLK. U, U + LP (UP CLOSE)
TORCH HIM (SIX-BUTTON): HOLD BLK. U, U + HP (UP CLOSE)

PIT/SPIKES:
B, F, F + BLK

BABALITIES AND FRIENDSHIPS — A WARNING

In order to pull off either a Babality or a Friendship move, it is important that no punch moves are used in the winning round. If you do, the option to perform one of the two is deleted. You have been warned.

THE HIDDEN FIGHTERS

Accessing the game's hidden fighters can seem a rather hit and miss affair. However, there is a code to battling the awesome three. Here's how:

NOOB SAIBOT: Win twenty-five bouts in a row. The last MUST be against a second player.

JADE:Jade can onl be accessed in one-player mode. The player must win a round against the fighter situated under the question mark on Mortal Mountain without using high kicks, high punches, low kicks or blocks.

SMOKE: Found within the 'portal' stage, press block and down together (it doesn't work just holding them) within a second of the 'Toasty' sprite appearing. This only works in two-player mode, though.



SHANG TSUNG

SPECIAL MOVES:

1 SKULL: B, B + HP
2 SKULLS: B, B, F + HP
3 SKULLS: B, B, F, F + HP
MORPH TO KUNG-LAO: B, D, B + HK
MORPH TO LIU KANG: B, F, F + BLK
MORPH TO CAGE: B, B, D + LP
MORPH TO KITANA: BLK, BLK, BLK (QUICKLY)
MORPH TO JAX: D, F, B + HK
MORPH TO RAYDEN: D, B, F + LK
MORPH TO BARAKA: D, D + LK
MORPH TO MILEENA (THREE-BUTTON): HOLD LK
MORPH TO MILEENA (SIX-BUTTON): HOLD HP
MORPH TO SUB-ZERO: F, D, F + HP
MORPH TO SCORPION: HOLD BLK, U, U
MORPH TO REPTILE (THREE-BUTTON): HOLD BLK, U, D + LP
MORPH TO REPTILE (SIX-BUTTON): HOLD BLK, U, D + HP
NB: WHEN MORPHED ANY CHARACTERS' SPECIAL MOVES CAN BE PERFORMED...

SOUL SUCK



HOLD BLK. U, D, U + LK

BABALITY



B, F, D + HK

FRIENDSHIP



B, B, D, F + HK

KINTARO MORPH



(THREE-BUTTON): HOLD LK FOR FIFTEEN SECONDS KINTARO MORPH (SIX-BUTTON): HOLD LP FOR FIFTEEN SECONDS

FATALITIES

DIVE -O-DEATH



HOLD HK FOR THREE SECONDS. RELEASE ONE INCH FROM VICTIM

PIT/SPIKES: HOLD BLK. D, D, U, D



KITANA

SPECIAL MOVES:

FAN SWIPE: B + HP
FAN TOSS (THREE-BUTTON): F, F, LP
FAN TOSS (SIX-BUTTON): F, F, LP + HP
SPIN FAN LIFT: B, B, B + HP
SQUARE WAVE PUNCH: 1/4 CIRCLE AWAY + HP

BABALITY



D, D, D + LK

FRIENDSHIP



D, D, D, U + LK

FATALITIES

DECAPITATION





BLK, BLK, BLK + HK (UP CLOSE)

KISS-OFF







HOLD LK. F, F, D, F. RELEASE LK (UP CLOSE)

PIT/SPIKES: F, D, F + HK



MILEENA

SPECIAL MOVES:

TELEPORT KICK: F, F + LK
ROLL ATTACK: B, B, D + HK
SAI TOSS (THREE-BUTTON): HOLD LK FOR TWO SECONDS. RELEASE
SAI TOSS (SIX-BUTTON): HOLD HP FOR TWO SECONDS. RELEASE

BABALITY



D, D, D + HK

FRIENDSHIP



D, D, D, U + HK

FATALITIES

PSYCHO STAB





(THREE-BUTTON): F, B, F + HP (UP CLOSE)
PSYCHO STAB (SIX-BUTTON): F, B, F + LP (UP CLOSE)

SUCKA







HOLD HK FOR THREE SECONDS. RELEASE (UP CLOSE)

PIT/SPIKES: F, D, F + LK



REPTILE

SPECIAL MOVES:

ACID SPIT: F, F + HP
ORB (THREE-BUTTON): B, B + LP
ORB (SIX-BUTTON): B, B + LP, HP
SLIDE (THREE-BUTTON): B + BLK + LK + HP
SLIDE (SIX-BUTTON): B + BLK + LK + LP
INVISIBILITY (THREE-BUTTON): BLK + U, U. RELEASE BLK, D, LP
INVISIBILITY (SIX-BUTTON): BLK + U, U. RELEASE BLK, D, HP

BABALITY



D, B, B + LK

FRIENDSHIP



B, B, D + LK

FATALITIES

INVISIBLE KILL

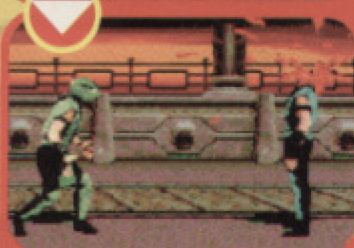




F, F, DOWN + HK (USE INVISIBILITY MOVE AND MOVE UP CLOSE TFOR MOVE)

TONGUE LASHING





B, B, D + LP (FROM 1/2 A SCREEN AWAY)

PIT/SPIKES: D, F, F + BLK



JAX

SPECIAL MOVES:

SUPER SLAM: LP (WHILST PERFORMING NORMAL SLAM. CAN BE USED THREE TIMES)
EARTHQUAKE PUNCH: HOLD LK FOR THREE SECONDS. RELEASE
GOTCHA GRAB: F, F, LP. KEEP PRESSING LP FOR UP TO FIVE HITS
ENERGY WAVE: 1/2 CIRCLE AWAY + HK
BACK BREAKER: BLK WHILST BOTH ARE IN THE AIR

BABALITY



D, D, D + LK

FRIENDSHIP



D, D, D, U + LK

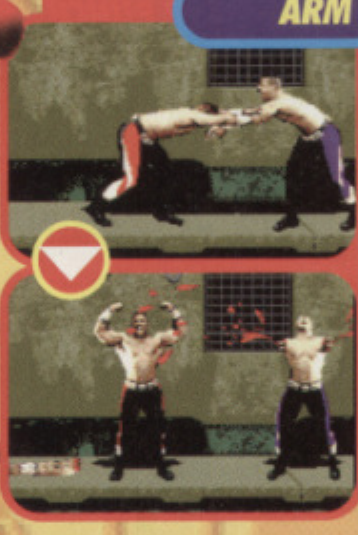
FATALITIES

HEAD CLAP



HEAD CLAP (THREE-BUTTON): HOLD HK. F, F, F + RELEASE HK (UP CLOSE)
HEAD CLAP (SIX-BUTTON): HOLD LP. F, F, F + RELEASE LP (UP CLOSE)

ARM RIP



BLK, BLK, BLK, BLK, LP (ONE INCH AWAY)

PIT/SPIKES: HOLD BLK. U, U, D + LK



JOHHNY CAGE

SPECIAL MOVES:

HIGH SNOT TRAIL: 1/2 CIRCLE AWAY + HP
LOW SNOT TRAIL (THREE-BUTTON): 1/2 CIRCLE TOWARDS + HP
LOW SNOT TRAIL (SIX-BUTTON): 1/2 CIRCLE TOWARDS + LP
SHADOW KICK: B, F + LK
SHADOW UPPERCUT: B, D, B + HP
PACKAGE CHECK: BLK + LP

BABALITY



B, B, B + HK

FRIENDSHIP



D, D, D, D + HK

FATALITIES

TORSO RIP



(THREE-BUTTON): D, D, F, F + LP (UP CLOSE)
TORSO RIP (SIX-BUTTON): D, D, F, F + HP (UP CLOSE)

DECAPTITATION



F, F, D, U (UP CLOSE)

PIT/SPIKES: D, D, D + HK



KUNG LAO

SPECIAL MOVES:

HAT TOSS (THREE-BUTTON): B, F + HP
HAT TOSS (SIX-BUTTON): B, F + LP
WHIRLWIND SPIN: U + BLK. U + LK. TAP LK TO KEEP SPINNING
AERIAL KICK: D + HK (MID-JUMP)

BABALITY



B, B, F, F + HK

FRIENDSHIP



B, B, B, D + HK

FATALITIES

HAT DECAP

(THREE-BUTTON): HOLD HP (MOVE BACK TO EDGE OF SCREEN). RELEASE
HAT DECAP (SIX-BUTTON): HOLD LP (MOVE BACK TO EDGE OF SCREEN). RELEASE

PIT/SPIKES:
F, F, F + HP







RAYDEN

SPECIAL MOVES:

SUPER SHOCKER: HOLD LK (UP CLOSE). RELEASE, WHILST PRESSING LK REPEATEDLY
SUPER PUNCH: (THREE-BUTTON): HOLD HK FOR SIX SECONDS (UP CLOSE)
SUPER PUNCH: (SIX-BUTTON): HOLD HP FOR SIX SECONDS (UP CLOSE)
NB: KEEP BUTTON HELD AT END OF ROUND...

BABALITY



D, D, U + HK

FRIENDSHIP



D, B, F + HK (THREE INCHES AWAY)

FATALITIES

SUPER SHOCKER



HOLD LK (UP CLOSE). RELEASE, WHILST PRESSING LK REPEATEDLY

SUPER PUNCH



(THREE-BUTTON): HOLD HK FOR SIX SECONDS (UP CLOSE)
SUPER PUNCH (SIX-BUTTON): HOLD HP FOR SIX SECONDS (UP CLOSE)
NB: KEEP BUTTON HELD AT END OF ROUND...

PIT/SPIKES:
(THREE-BUTTON): U, U + LP
(SIX-BUTTON): U, U + HP





SUB-ZERO

SPECIAL MOVES:

FREEZE (THREE-BUTTON): 1/4 CIRCLE TOWARDS + HP
FREEZE (SIX-BUTTON): 1/4 CIRCLE TOWARDS + LP
GROUND FREEZE: 1/4 CIRCLE AWAY + LK
SLIDE (THREE-BUTTON): B + BLK + LK + HP
SLIDE (SIX-BUTTON): B + BLK + LK + LP

BABALITY



D, B, B + HK

FRIENDSHIP



B, B, D + HK

FATALITIES

PITCH 'O' DOOM



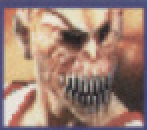
(THREE-BUTTON): HOLD LK. B, B, D, F + RELEASE LK (FROM OPPOSITE SIDE OF SCREEN)
PITCH 'O' DOOM (SIX-BUTTON): HOLD LP. B, B, D, F + RELEASE LP

SUPER FREEZE/SHATTER PUNCH



F, F, D + HK. F, D, F, F + HP (UP CLOSE)

PIT/SPIKES:
D, F, F + BLK



BARAKA

SPECIAL MOVES:

- DOUBLE KICK: TAP HK TWICE (UP CLOSE)
- BLADE SWIPE: B + HP
- BLADE FURY: B, B, B + LP
- BLADE SPARK: 1/4 CIRCLE AWAY + HP

BABALITY



F, F, F + HK

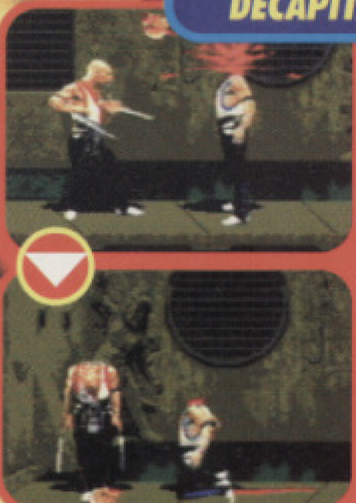
FRIENDSHIP



HOLD BLK. U, F, F + HK

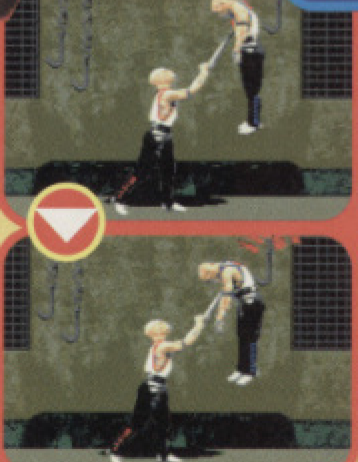
FATALITIES

DECAPITATION



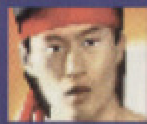
B, B, B + HP
(UP CLOSE)
IMPALING

IMPALING



B, F, D, F + LP
(UP CLOSE)

PIT/SPIKES:
F, F, D + HK



LIU KANG

SPECIAL MOVES:

- STANDING FIREBALL: F, F + HP
- CROUCHING FIREBALL: F, + LP
- FLYING KICK: F, F + HK
- BICYCLE KICK: HOLD LK FOR FIVE SECONDS AND RELEASE

BABALITY



D, D, F, B + LK

FRIENDSHIP



F, B, B, B + LK

FATALITIES

WHEEL KICK:



BLK + CIRCLE
AWAY

PIT/SPIKES:
B, F, F + LK

DRAGON



D, F, B, B + HK
(UP CLOSE)



THE CHA

WORLD ONE - THE FOREST

Attention! Right then you lot I want some discipline for this operation. We have a tough task ahead of us, but if you play it cool and listen to instructions we'll have you through in no time. I'm going to hand you over to your commanding officer Paul Bufton who will ensure the success of your mission.

PRE-MISSION BRIEFING

Okay, listen up! The real key to success is in choosing your team. Look for two characters who can back each other up. That is to say, you don't want to be playing the Thug if the second player is the Scientist who's going to steal all of your power-ups and cash. So weigh up all of their attributes carefully before setting off. For the sake of this mission I will be taking the Navvie and the Gentleman into the battle zone. As for general rules:

1. Keep shooting at all times – you never know what you might hit by accident.
2. Take as much time as you need and keep going at a steady pace.
3. Always go for the power-ups. Don't worry about the CPU character, he'll look after himself.
4. If you come to a dead-end with no keys available, try everything from special attacks to plain blasting. It may be just a case of deactivating something.

LEVEL ONE – THE BEGINNING

This is your opportunity to get to grips with the characters and the terrain. But don't take things too easy as there are plenty of monsters to overcome. The general rules apply as before but, in particular, don't miss out on the cash, as you'll need it to buy extra lives and health.



KEY TO YOUR HEART

After grabbing the first Death Zone Token (DZT), make sure you pick up the set of gold keys to the far right. A passage will open through the bushes uncovering a cache of food, cash, and special power-ups.

LEVEL TWO – MUD RIVERS

To avoid getting caught in cross-fire remember some of the islands and peninsulas have small outcrops from where you can reach and destroy potential hazards. Forward thinking pays dividends in this maze of mud pools and wooden bridges.



BRIDGE TOO FAR

By blasting the blue monster on the island, some cash appears. More importantly though, a small bridge materialises allowing you to cross and grab the other gold keys, opening a further bridge to more cash and keys.



WHICH WAY?

There are two choices of route when it comes to completing this level. By taking the route north you risk life and limb at the hands of the four-way launchers, but then the power-up rewards are greater. If you're low on health a far easier option is to the east as you can take out most of the opponents from the safety of another island.

LAST STEP

Only half a staircase? First go to the right and pocket the gold keys. Voilà! Up pops the entire flight of steps. Watch out for those rather speedy monsters, though. To put an end to their antics, simply steal their door keys. Then it's home free to replenish those supplies with the cash collected during your travels.

OS ENGINE



LEVEL THREE – RINGS
The action starts to get a little more puzzle-orientated in this level. Be on the look out for all the keys to find the hidden sections.

HIDDEN POWER-UPS
Instead of continuing north after hitting the node, return to where you found the first set of silver keys and you'll find the gold set. As if by magic the wall to the left has gone, so follow the path to the bottom killing the beetles. Pick up the set of gold keys, find the third statue







on the left and blast it — more gold keys. These open the bushes to the right giving you goodies galore!

SECOND PORTCULLIS
Don't exit through the first portcullis if you've found the secret grotto of hidden power-ups. Instead, head to the far left where the wall has opened giving access to the last set of gold keys and the final node. Activate the node and it's time to make a sharp exit through the gate marked B.



LEVEL FOUR – ROCKIES
If you came through the B gate from the previous level then it's time to stock up on lovely cash and stuff. It certainly is a fitting title for this level as it's blasting action on numerous levels, and the only way to progress to a higher path is again to find those keys.

ROCK OF FORTUNE
Blast this fella and the keys that you'll find will open a bridge to a DZT and a very nifty short cut.



WORLD TWO – THE WORKSHOPS

PASSWORD – RMYN8CPD#7QF

LEVEL ONE – MAZE
If you thought the first world was a struggle, then hold onto your hats as we enter the labyrinthian confusion crawling with really big and bad thugs. After picking up any keys, it is essential to double check walls for secret passages leading to goodies.





HANDY POINTER
Now that's a bit of a give away, isn't it? Kill the big guy to the south and then hit the wall to claim a full house.

CENTRAL RESERVATION
Don't forget to make your way to the centre of the maze. The wall may seem solid, but with a quick blast you can claim the map.

LEVEL TWO – TRAPS
It's time for yellow monster fun! These beasties take several hits before going down, so keep a'shooting and a'moving. What's more, warp zones tend to materialise before you have the chance to explore fully.



ALL FOUR ONE
Do you really need this cash? If you pick it up, you're asking for trouble from its four guardians.

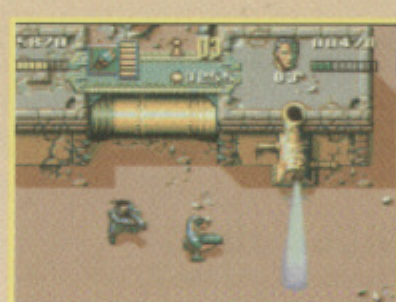
TRAP DOOR
To open the door and save your skin, go round in a clockwise direction. Two monsters will appear, but watch that wall fence them in.

LEVEL THREE – STEAM
Now the pressure is starting to build right up to a good head of steam. Timing is essential for the release valves that shoot out life-threatening jets.



KEY'S UNDER THE DOORMAT
Well, not quite. But you will discover a set of keys when you shoot the wall between the third and fourth steam valves. With them in your pocket, they open the door to the south where the map is to be found.

SCALDING
Ouch, that hurts! There's no way you can walk through the steam, instead you have to switch it off by blasting the tubing next to it.



WORLD THREE – FORTESQUE MANSION

PASSWORD – QG36C1SVKLJC

LEVEL ONE – THE PITS
One step closer to the final conflict, the mansion has its own peculiar breed of nasties. Watch out in particular for the Addams Family-esque hand creatures and the death's-head wall-mounted missile launchers.

WELCOMING COMMITTEE
From the outset it's a right old barrage of mayhem and monsters. Once you've finished off the hands, climb the stairs and stand against the wall. In this position fire left and right to take out the death-head one by one.

HIDDEN MAP
Feeling a bit lost? Then why not try a map. By shooting the first statue from the right, the map appears.



BRIDGE MANIA
Those gold keys are going to get you into all sorts of trouble. But don't worry if you get cut off behind you, as they do eventually lead you round the circuit and to the exit.

LEVEL TWO – CONFUSION
It's decision time. There are several different routes to completion, but to grab the cash and power-ups try the left-hand corridor.

WARP WALL
You can't get to this node by normal means. To get to it, stand on the square tile and shoot the wall ahead of you. A bridge makes an appearance leading to the silver keys. Once in possession of these fells, it's back to the node and away you go.



CORNERED
What! No way out with some bald goon lobbing bombs at you! The only language he understands is the gun. When he's smoked, the door will open.

LEVEL THREE – REVERSE
Things get a little crazy when the enemies turn out to be mirror images of your characters. You'd better be swift over this level.

LEVEL FOUR – WAY OUT
This is the last chance saloon for stocking up on bonus bits before the entrance to the cellar. The action is as furious as ever, but keep your head and we're through to the last level.



ROOMS TO GO
Be quick getting into these rooms, as the only way to get in is by nabbing the purple nasties as they exit. Your best bet for power-ups is to head for the top right room first to find the keys.

ENTER THE TWILIGHT ZONE
Walk into this wall and it's secret room ahoy! Grab all of the stuff and then stand on the circular tile in the bottom right corner to return.

WORLD FOUR – THE CELLARS

PASSWORD – F#KPCGFTLV2Y

LEVEL ONE – SEWER
Uh-oh! Now we're getting heavy — heavy metal, that is. Things take a technical turn as robots attack from all sides and take more hits to kill.



GLUG! GLUG!
Unblock those drains with this switch to progress further.

LEVEL TWO – PUMP ROOM
There's more of the same action on a larger scale in the pump rooms. Don't forget those switches to drain the paths



HALF A STAIRCASE
To extend the staircase fully on the left side, blast all three switches to the down position. The right-hand switch also drains the water from the next sump.

LEVEL THREE – HALL OF MACHINES
The Engine's last line of defence rests on its robot army and force fields. Deactivate the force fields by destroying the power supply either side. Take it step by step and keep grabbing those DZTs at the first opportunity.

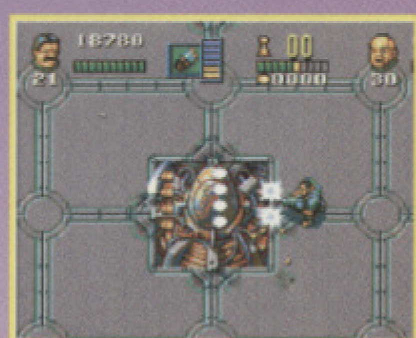
NO EXIT!
Now that's just fine. You've made your way up the hall of death and now you can't get out! Of course you can. Walk south a tad until you find the pod. Shoot it.

LEVEL FOUR – TIME FOR CHAOS
Well, troops, here we are at the final conflict. Avoid damage at all costs as the final onslaught takes all you've got. The scenario is simple: the four generators powering the Engine's external force field must be destroyed before taking on the machine. Good luck, you're going to need it!

WALK INTO THE LIGHT
Once all four generators are shut down, go to the front of the Engine and step into the light circle. You're now teleported to



the innards of the machine.



THE END...
After a job well done, it's time to sit back and watch the credits. The chaos has ended, you will be remembered...



EARTHWORM JIM



1 PLAYER | **24 MEG**

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

PRICE	TBA
BY	PLAYMATES
RELEASE	TBA

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 1
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: VERY GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: TOUGH

1ST DAY SCORE
Beat Psy-Crow in the asteroid race.

ORIGIN
Jim is the latest superhero to come from the Dave Perry stable of platform antics.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Using the power of the Cybernetic War Suit, rescue the beautiful Princess What's Her Name

Our story begins in a leafy suburban garden. Creatures of all shapes and sizes go about their daily business as card carrying members of the food chain. A peckish crow swoops overhead looking for his lunch. Between the blades of grass he spies a lone, juicy, wiggling worm with the word 'Tasty' tattooed on his back...

Meanwhile, somewhere on the other side of the stratosphere, a battle rages. The all-round intergalactic baddie, Psy-Crow, has been on the trail of the stolen Cybernetic War Suit since it disappeared from the armoury of his ruler, her royal highness Queen Pulsating, Bloated, Festering, Sweaty, Puss-Filled, Malformed, Slug-for-a-Butt. The ether sizzles with plasma blasts discharged from the hilts of the warring factions. In a desperate bid to snatch the precious suit, Psy-Crow vapourises the thief's craft, only to witness the suit's plummeting descent into the Earth's atmosphere.

Returning to Earth we find the crow in hot pursuit of his potential meal ticket. The pace quickens as the worm realises his dirt-munching days are rapidly coming to a close. But what's this? There's a large boom overhead as something hurtles into view. With a crash and bang, the white object from above comes to a sudden standstill.The race is still on, however, and the crow opens his beak in anticipation of this tasty morsel.
There's only one hope for the worm, and that is to throw himself into an opening up ahead. Reacting to the presence of a carbon-based life form, the suit powers up, transmogifying our humble earthworm into Jim, Earthworm Jim, Saviour of the Universe!

MEGA GAME







WORM YOUR WAY OUT

Is there nothing this boy can't do? Well it does help that he's got his suit. But the combination of common household worm and ultra technology is the key to success.

WORM WHIP

In times of low ammo, the whip is always a useful substitute. In a move of selflessness, Jim lets the suit take control and use his wormly body as a bull-whip. Extremely useful for swinging across chasms and scaling heights.



WORM JIM









▲ *It's Earthworm underwater, the original DSV divvy.*





▲ *Dare you take on the power of Hackney Environmental Services, foolish mortal?*

PLASMA BLASTER

A cross between an Uzi and a particle beam, this baby sure packs a punch. It is essential though to keep a watchful eye on the ammo counter as mindless blasting drains it quickly. Upgradable to an almighty death ray with a power icon.



HELICOPTER HEAD

There's no need to worry if Jim falls off a high ledge as his worm talents allow you to use his head as a helicopter, resulting in a soft landing.



HANGING OUT

A superb example of worm harmony with machine is the way Jim crosses rope bridges. Suspended from the line above, Jim uses his head and one suit hand to swing ape-like to the other side. The spare hand is vital to combat any grief from the skies or ground.

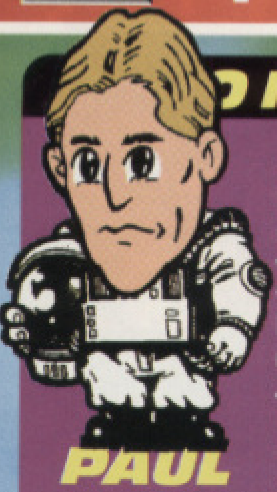




▲ *Ride that rodent, pardner.*



▲ *Oh, for the wings, for the wings, of a dove!*



OMMENT

PAUL

Roll over Sonic, a new kid has come to town, and he means business. No longer will platformers suffer from their present reputation of being samey and unoriginal thanks to Earthworm Jim. This game is so stunning, it has attracted gasps of admiration from everyone who has seen it. We were promised an interactive cartoon, and we've got it! Truly Earthworm Jim is a benchmark in Megadrive gaming, pushing the animation and the sound to their very limits. The character of Jim has been immaculately put together, combining humour and artistry in an unbeatable formula, the same going for the remainder of the character sprites. What's more, unlike many of its contemporaries, this game has an ideal difficulty setting, allowing progression once it's truly earned. Quite simply Earthworm Jim is, in my opinion, one of the greatest games to grace the console. For the others there are no longer any excuses.

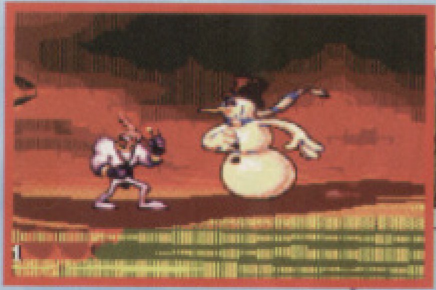




ANDY ASTEROIDS

With another level complete, Jim is forced to race Psy-Crow to the next location. The dash through hyperspace is fraught with danger as they pass through the asteroid belt. To protect himself from the oncoming chunks of rock, Jim can pick up shields and rocket packs to zip him along with invincibility. To add a hint of danger to the proceedings, if Jim is beaten by Psy-Crow to the next stage, he has to fight him to enter the level.





▲ *You'll soon be yellow snow, al.*



▲ ***If you strike me down now... I'll be two separate little wiggly bits.***











▲ *Just call me Calvin.*

BOSSES

A vast selection of extremely unsavoury characters have been brought in to give Jim one heck of a time! But not satisfied with just one end-of-level meanie, a mid-level boss has been included. It's not your standard shoot 'em 'til they die though. Jim has to find a weak spot to finish them off.



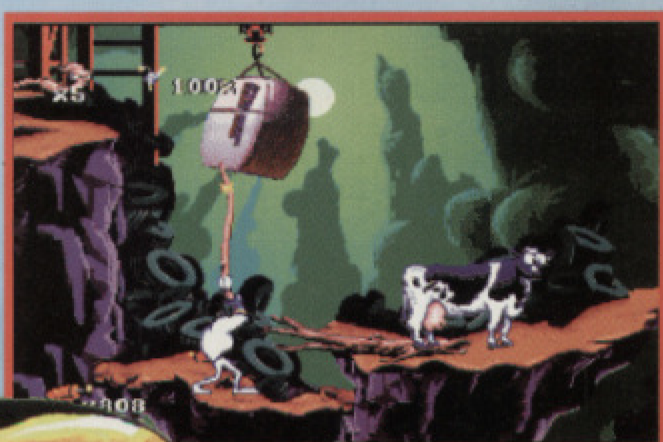


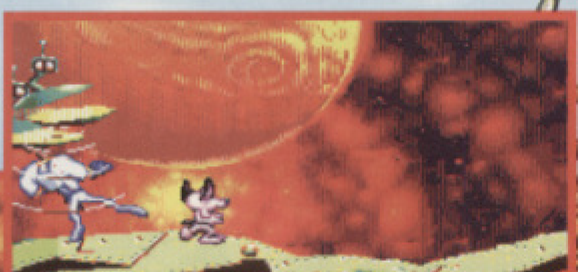






▲ *It's a long way down.*





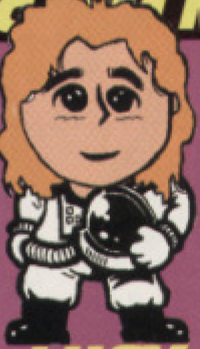


▲ *Too bizarre to even caption.*



▲ *Cow launch in five seconds. Udders? Check! Swishy tail? Check! Moo noise? Check!*

COMMENT

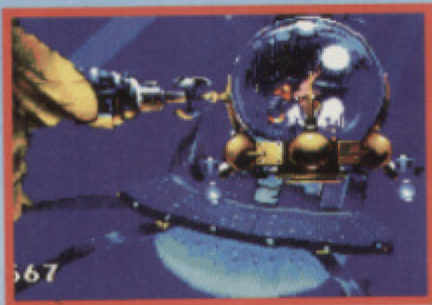


LUCY

Before this little gem arrived in the office, I have to admit that on hearing it was a Dave Perry platformer, I cynically presumed it would be yet another revamp of Aladdin, Jungle Book, Cool Spot etc — amazing graphics but shallow and too-easy gameplay. I am delighted to say I was forced to eat my words. Oh I was right about the graphics — they're absolutely stunning with stacks of most excellent animation — but this time the gameplay lives up to the looks with large, inventive levels, smoothly responsive controls and lots of variety in playing styles such as the between-level flying sections, the submarine thrusting level and many thinking-mans' bosses to conquer. The whole game is packed with humour, which, unusually for a console game, actually works and it sounds great too with apt sound effects and groovy tunes abounding. And it's hard. Damn hard in places but not quite frustrating enough to stop you coming back again and again and again.... Yes this game absolutely oozes addictiveness as well — I haven't been able to tear myself away from it for the last five days and I'm not even close to completing it yet. All in all a damn fine game — possibly the best platformer ever — and well worth a look by everybody.

RUMBLINGS FROM THE GROUND

Now a cartoon wouldn't be a cartoon if it didn't have bangs and crashes. All kinds of squeaks, poings, and thuds, punctuate the platforms of peril. And to give ol' Jim more personality, he shouts out cries of pain and glee. Groovy!





▲ *Crikey, it's like being trapped in Mystic Meg's big juicy apple.*



DRAMATIC INTERLUDES

There's never a dull moment when Jim's in town. Aside from his movements in motion, the team at Shiny have included quirky tricks for Jim to perform when left idle. From his operatic performance, to accidentally blasting his head to smithereens, Earthworm Jim's comedy capers are ceaseless.







SHINY HAPPY PEOPLE?

So just who are these Shiny people — the programmers of this fine platform fest? Well, they're a bit of a mixed bunch, half American, half British. Among them they've developed some extremely well-known titles, including, Aladdin, Cool Spot, Global Gladiators, Alien 3, Smash TV, and Jurassic Park.

GRAPHICS — 95

▲Poetry in motion. Superb animation coupled with stunningly sumptuous sprites and backgrounds.

SOUND — 93

▲An absolute feast for the ears. The music has been beautifully composed, and the FX have to be heard to be believed.

PLAYABILITY — 92

▲One go and you're hooked. Responds like a dream to your every command. Bliss.

LASTABILITY — 93

▲This is one tough cookie to crack with a cleverly constructed success and reward formula.
▼Sometimes it can be a little bit too hard for its own good.

VFM — 91

▲If this is released at around the £45 mark, then this is most worthy of the cash.

OVERALL — 93

One of the most beautiful and playable platform games to ever land on the shores of Megadrive gaming. Earthworm Jim is quite simply superb.



1-2 PLAYERS | **16 MEG**

GAME TYPE
PLATFORMß

PRICE	TBA
BY	ACCOLADE
RELEASE	SEPTEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: NONE
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE
103,000

ORIGIN
Accolade's follow up to Bubsy, the 'interactive cartoon' that typifies many a Megadrive platform game.

GAME BREAKDOWN

ORIGINALITY	REFLEXES	CHALLENGE	ACTION	STRATEGY
2/5	3/5	3/5	3/5	2/5

GAME AIM
Make your way through 30 levels of the Amazatorium: jumping, shooting and playing sub-games for points.



BUB

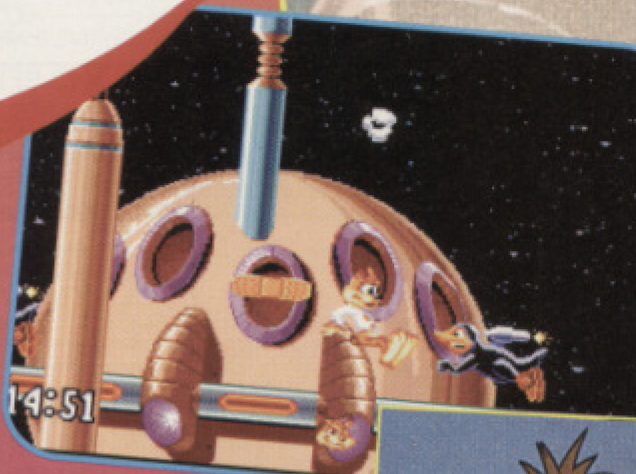
I'm reporting for 'Variety' magazine, April 2035. My assignment is a rare interview with Bubsy Bobcat, legendary variety video games entertainer in the last decade of the twentieth century. Arriving early, I wait for him off-stage, as he takes one more encore from the eager crowd. He shuffles off into the wings. Spying me, he smiles, "Come to my dressing room, it'll be more comfortable to talk there".

He relaxes with a tipple and listens to my questions, about his early days as a video games star.

"Ah! I'm glad you asked me about that. I remember those early games with such fondness. I made my debut with Accolade in 1993, with 'Claws Encounters of the Furred Kind'. It was fun to do, the sort of frothy platform-actioner that was popular with the youth of that time. I very much enjoyed the wise-cracking role I had. But some said I ran too fast, and hit enemies off-screen too easily.

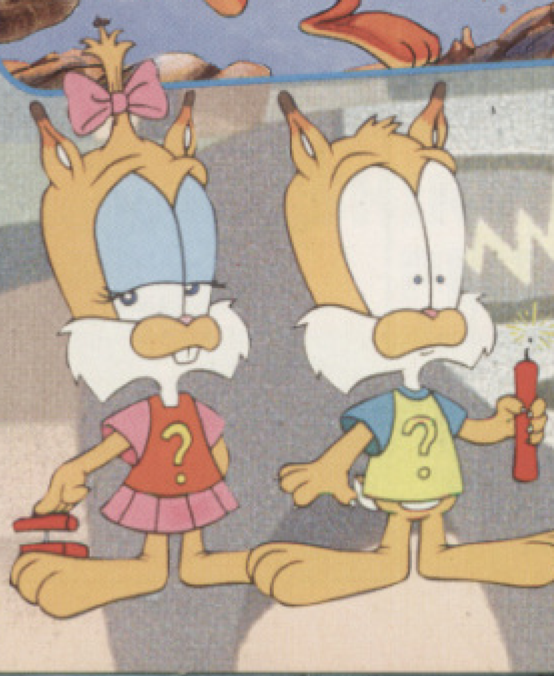
"I think we've sorted those problems out with the sequel Bubsy II — In the Amazatorium. I play myself again, but this time as the tour guide of this fabulous building called the Amazatorium. It was a kind of 'Die-hard' video game for fluffy animals, as the building was set on three floors, each filled with horrible denizens, and lots of impossible leaps. I did all my own stunts, you know".

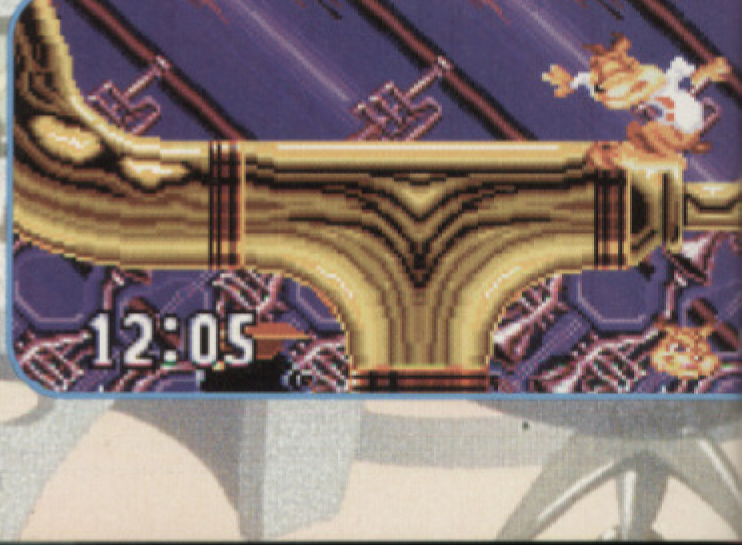
At that, Mr Martin-Cruz, Bubsy's faithful time-served agent knocks on the dressing room door. The entertainer sighs wearily, puffs his make-up and bids me adieu.













BUILDING TENSION

Dr V. Reality's architectural wonder, the Amazatorium has been hijacked by porcine terrorist Oinker P. Hamm. More unpredictable than a Pepperami on chilli powder, Oinker has turned all three floors of the Amazatorium into a death trap. The only hope lies in mild-mannered janitor, Bubsy Bobcat. The building's three floors are divided into two wings, east and west. Each wing has a series of five rooms, decorated distinctly in the style of the Amazatorium's five themes. By basic arithmetical processes, six wings of five rooms comes to a grand total of 30 levels:





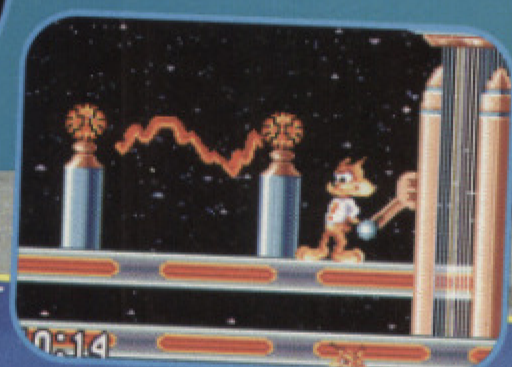
EGYPTIAN

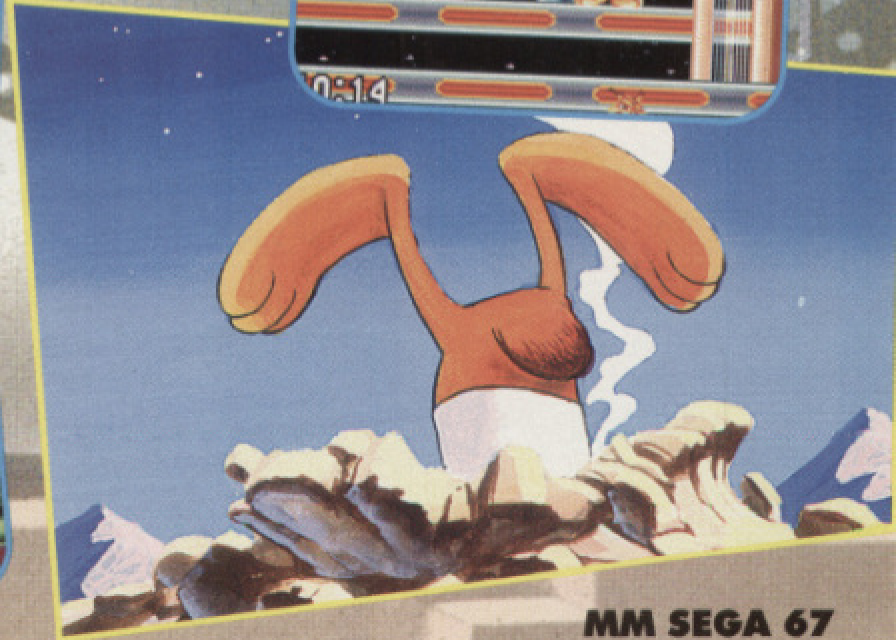
Could be retitled 'Pyramid of Fear'. Bubsy faces cursed hieroglyphics which come to life, underground waterways and the warming flames of papyrus torches.

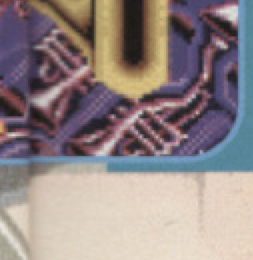


SPACE

Bubsy goes boldly where someone has definitely gone before, because the place is filled with Oinker's minions, plus electrified barriers. However, there's a neat scrolling shoot 'em up section incorporated within the level.











MUSICAL

It's bum notes or golden passages, as Bubsy faces some crotchety musical instruments. Hitching rides on quavers, staves and the big bass drum, Bubsy can get the horn and prove chords are back in fashion.





AERIAL

Washes whiter? Who knows, but this airborne level is a departure from the rest of the game. Oinker's minions take to the air in their magnificent flying machines: flying pedalloes, dirigibles and bi-planes. Luckily Bubsy is armed to his feline fangs with front-mounted cannon and bombs.



▼ *With Bubsy on a roll, who can save Oinker's bacon now?*



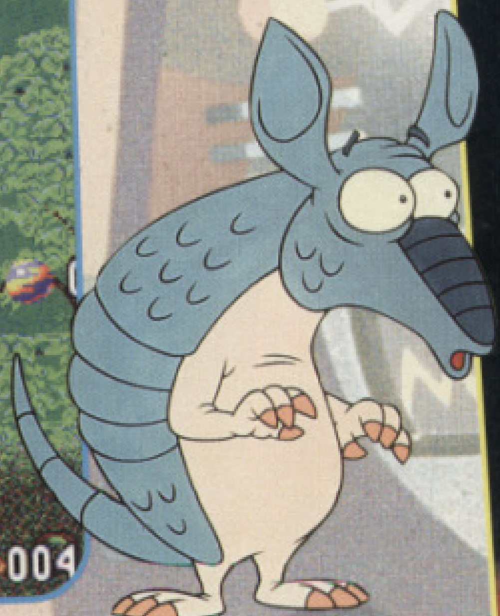


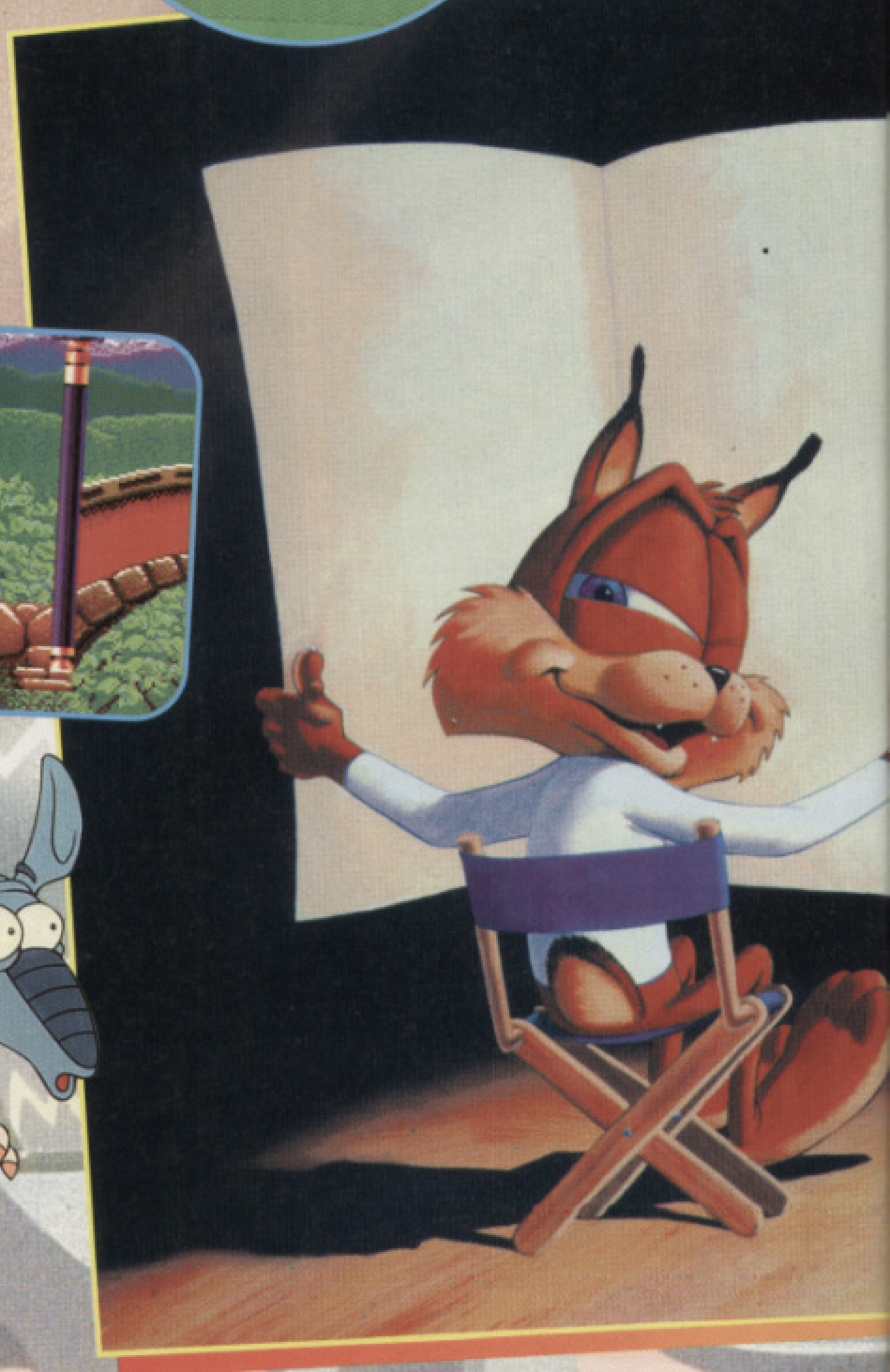


MEDIAEVAL

In days of yore... so the ale-song goes, Bubsy steps into the spurs of your knight errant, exploring the castles, pleasant woods and parapets of the Middle-aged countryside.







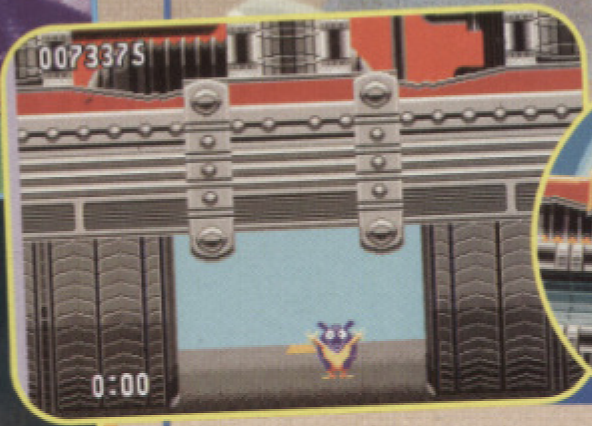
SUB-U-LIKE

Bubsy II, like its predecessor has dark recesses on every levels! Walking into these shady doorways is taking a bit of a gamble. Some whisk you to another part of the same level, while others are the portals to three bizarre sub-games that give Bubsy a break from the left/right action.

FROGAPULT

A shooting-gallery game played out over a target-filled pond. Catapult the hapless amphibians as they trundle into range.







ARMADILLO DROP

Set in the inside of a juggernaut's engine cooling system, featuring a terrified armadillo, this is too bizarre to express adequately in words.

LIQUID LUNACY

A sub-aquatic platform sojourn, but one crammed with bonus bubbles — and the threat of whirlpools. Entered by diving into water.







▶ *Hasta la vista, Bubsy.*



BUBSY'S BITS

Our star has picked up a few 'props', shall we say, that he didn't have before. The most commonly employed is the 'Nerf Ballzooka', a furball fire-arm that proves most effective. Smart Bombs are self-explanatory, while the portable hole allows him to make a Python-esque exit from any level. The diving suit is useful for water sports, and Bubsy looks lovely in rubber.

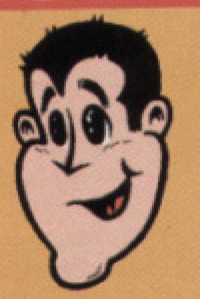
COMMENT



PAUL

There are those who dismiss platformers as being too alike in content and action. Certainly this is the case among many of today's offerings. Yet Bubsy has a certain edge over the rest of the competition, and that edge is called fun. Sure there are faults, some of them irritating – the scrolling coming to a sudden halt after a good sprint and the untimely deaths – but the characterisation is so charming that these faults are soon ignored. Bubsy 2 is what a platform game should be. The levels are immense and stacked high with goodies, and the baddies are nicely stompable. This is not to say the sequel is a tired and traditional platformer, because innovation is present. The level select presentation is beautifully done, but I do. have a problem with the experimental music section. If it's platform bobcat action you're after, you can't go far wrong with this offering.

COMMENT



GUS

The original Bubsy was just about as frustrating a game as you could find on the Megadrive. Although the character was capable of speed, the game didn't allow you to get up a pace, and accidental deaths were a constant hassle. The sequel has cleared up all the problems in the playability stakes — Bubsy is given a chance to show us his tricks. Overall, this is a lot more involved than the original, 'crammed' is the word I would use for 30-plus levels, three sub-games and a dual player mode. There's a good variety in the graphics, and the stages are huge, much in the same vein as Sonic 3. Although it's enjoyable exploring and using the items, I sometimes think quantity has taken precedence over quality, with some rather bland layouts. That said, there's always some feature to crop up and surprise you. Bubsy isn't exceptional, but it is solidly entertaining, and if you liked the original, you'll be very satisfied with this

FRIEND OR FIEND?

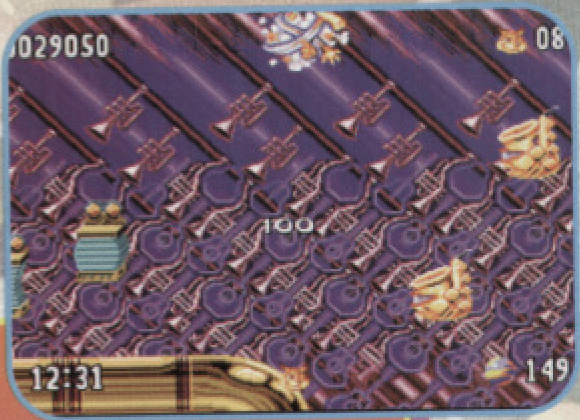
One bonus mode on the cart is the two-player game. Playing either the 'friend' or 'feisty' option, the main character is joined by a flying companion. Working cooperatively, they can use banana shots to clear enemies out of the way. However, playing mischievously, the bananas can be used to trip big Bubsy up.







Left-footed or right-footed? Who can tell? What does it mean?

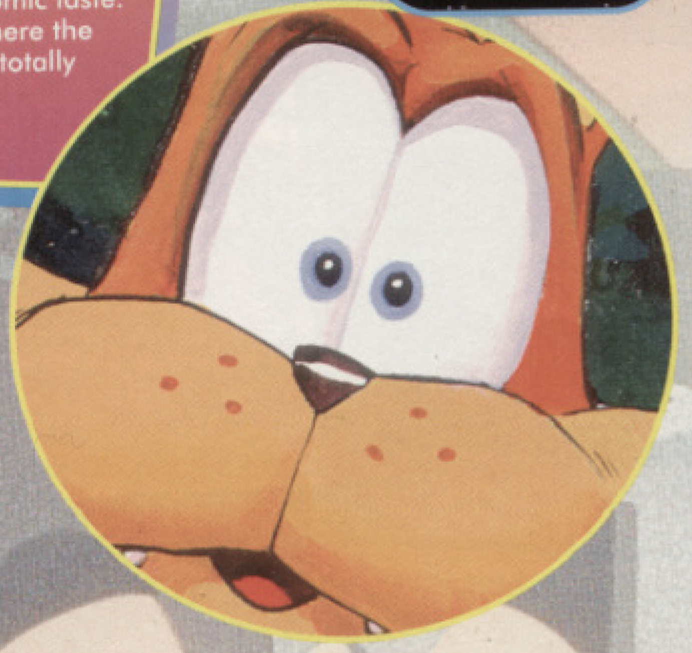




CAT RABBIT

As Accolade put it, 'Bubsy never shuts up' with his selection of soundbites, quotes and quips, especially when he cops it. This is a bonus or an aggravation, depending on your comic taste. Also, the programmers have attempted a system where the music changes mid-level to match the action. If not totally successful in practice, it is at least an original idea.





GRAPHICS 83

▲ Inventive themed backgrounds, that work best on the Mediaeval and Musical worlds.
▼ Scrappy sprite-handling in places, and some colour clash.

SOUND 74

▲ Bubsy talks a lot. A nice range of FX.
▼ The experimental changing music system does not work well.

PLAYABILITY 86

▲ Fluid, fast and nice to handle. Bubsy has a good feel.
▼ Not taxing in the brain department at all.

LASTABILITY 80

▲ A load of levels, and the sub games aren't to be sniffed at.
▼ Too many extra lives and credits than are required.

VFM 85

▲ A lot of development work, at the typically competitive Accolade price.
▼ There is a lot of platform competition out there.

OVERALL 84

A firm sequel, even a fine one. Filled with meaty chunks. Will be most appreciated by the hardcore of platform addicts.

MEGAMART

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1 PLAYERS | **4 MEG**

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

PRICE £34.99

BY SUNSOFT

RELEASE JANUARY

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: VERY GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE
25,000

ORIGIN
Take a dash of James Pond 3, a smidgen of cutesy Rainbow Bell, a dollop of chums action from Bubba 'N' Stix, and you have the idea.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Bubble and Squeak must work together as a team over 45 levels to release all of the imprisoned animal prisoners and locate the exits.

Bubble: "Squeak, we need to have a man to fluffy animal chat."
Squeak:"Squeak?"
Bubble:"I'm afraid I have some bad news. You see all of our fluffy chums have been abducted in a evil plot to rid the world of, er... fluffy animals."
Squeak: "Squeeeeak!"
Bubble: "Saddle up. It's time to go out there and kick some kidnapping butt!"
Sweeter than sugar-coated frosted Sugar Bombs, cuter than a whole mountain of pink fluffy teddy bears, two new and unlikely heroes grace our consoles in the guise of Bubble and Squeak. Bubble, the humanoid of the two and bearing an uncanny resemblance to Calvin of Calvin and Hobbes fame, has enlisted the help of his chum Squeak, the blue fluffy one. Together it's platform high jinks galore as they explore and help each other through the fondant iced-gem landscape. But this is no simple platform affair, as there's creepy crawlies and puzzles to boggle the mind.

COMMENT

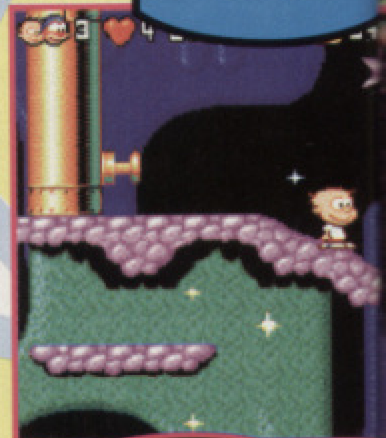


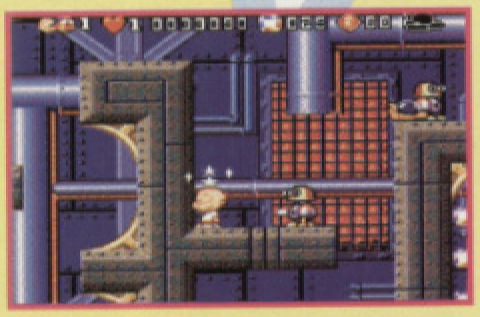
PAUL

On first sight of Bubble and Squeak I had that 'not another platform feeling'. But as soon as I got into the game, I realised that this was something new, something different. Everything is highly polished, from the characters' animated mannerisms, to the control system. But this is no veneer, because under the icing lies an extremely tough puzzler. The character interaction does take a while to get to used to and requires nerves of steel, but once mastered is very playable. On a slight downside, the music is essentially the same throughout all the levels, and the backdrops lack variation. But these minor faults dwindle into, insignificance when you consider its sheer size and number of levels. In a world of platform clones, I'd definitely go for the cute option.

HELPING HAND

What are chums for, if not to lend a hand when things get tough? He may look blue, furry, and stupid, but Squeak is an essential part to the pair's success. Bubble can position his mate by calling him and then asking him to stay where he is. When in stationary mode, Squeak can perform a number of tricks including giving his baby-faced pal a rocket boost up to unreachable platforms. Their acrobatics are used to propel them jointly towards the exit pole on each level







STARS IN THEIR POCKETS

Unlike most other platform heroes, the two friends don't have the use of a stomp attack. Instead, Bubble has an unlimited supply of shiny stars to lob at enemies, but poor old Squeak is weaponless. That is until he comes across a bubble gum machine.One chew on this magic bubble gum gives him the super power of being able to give Bubble a piggy-back, while at the same time annihilating enemies with death bubbles.







Bubble and Squeak









▲ *'I don't care how good your special sweets taste. I don't want to buy any!'*



4 Penguin alert! Shoot them from behind or they'll return your stars with their baseball bats.

1 Once you've got Squeak onto the lift below, this button will bring him to Bubble.

5 Home at last. Our two chums celebrate another fine level completion with a hearty handshake.

3 Squeak can't jump, so these ramps allow Bubble to spinball him to the next platform.

2 With Squeak positioned on the top level, Bubble is free to explore for gems down here.



◀ *'Don't worry I'll catch you',said Squeak remembering Bubble's blue fluffy animal joke from yesterday.*





SUB GAME

During their travels, the two chums must locate and collect submersible icons. On completion of the level they are transported into the bonus game, a Parodius -esque submarine blast 'em up. Watch out for those nasty old jellyfish, mind.

COMMENT



GUS

Platform games are like wine, are they not? Sometimes you get something in a fancy shaped bottle that's pink, ever so fizzy, and ends up tasting like cat's pee. Likewise, you get some fancy platform games that promise much but offer little. And then you get unassuming little vintages like Bubble and Squeak. Behind the bland exterior is a rocket of a platform puzzler: full-bodied, subtle and bound to mature over time. There's acres of satisfying gameplay, with strategy mixing with action in the same way as the much underrated James Pond 3. It's very much like a Millennium game, but with clever additions, like the rising water level, which adds a frisson of panic to many of the later levels. The assured presentation, crisp graphics and responsive control make this a Chateau Mouton-Rothschild, not a Country Manor. So light, subtle, so buy it!

HIGH TIDE WARNING!

The absence of an on-screen timer may fool some into thinking this is a lackadaisical affair. Not so, a more original approach has been adopted with the water level that rises inexorably, threatening either of the characters left on the lower levels.





▲ *'That's just fine! I offer you a friendly piggy-back, and you let one rip!'*



▲ *Our two heroes have come a cropper in Claire's reserve chocolate valley.*

POD PEOPLE

Dotted around the levels are the nasty incarceration pods holding the fluffy animals captive. Our two boys must gather up as many gems as their little handy-pandies can carry. On reaching a pod, Bubble releases a stream of gems to break the lock and free the cuddly toys.







GRAPHICS 84

▲ Extremely polished, with intricate main sprite animation.
▼ The backgrounds are a bit on the samey side.

SOUND 70

▲ Jolly, feel-good tunes that bounce quite nicely along.
▼ Not a great deal of variation in the music or FX

PLAYABILITY 89

▲ A superbly smooth control system that copes very well with the second character format.

LASTABILITY 87

▲ The continues/password combination makes progression a little too simple.

VFM 92

▲ With oodles of levels, bonuses, and a sub-game, it's worth the reduced tag.

OVERALL 90

A big nasty wolf of a puzzler clothed in baa-lamb clothing with a novel approach to platform gaming.



1-2 PLAYERS | **24 MEG**

GAME TYPE: ADVENTURE

PRICE: £54.99

BY: EA

RELEASE: OCTOBER

OPTIONS

CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: AVERAGE
GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD

1ST DAY SCORE

Finish the first island.

ORIGIN

Studied hard at beat' em up school, along with the likes of SSF2 and MK2, with ambitions to make it big this Autumn.

GAME BREAKDOWN



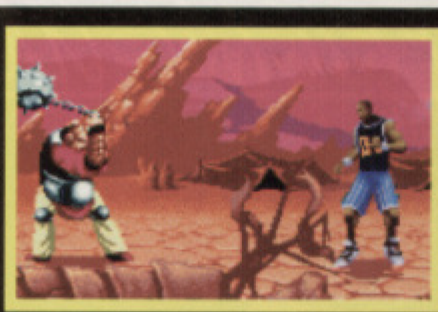
GAME AIM

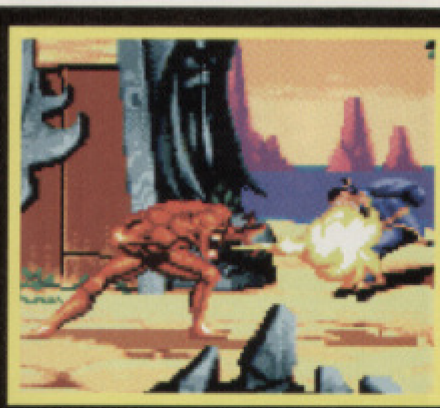
Guide Shaq through the realm of the Second World to put an end to Sett Ra's plans to enter the earthly world, by beating up his allies.

SHAQ

Long ago in the para-dimensional world of the Second World, the Sorcerer Sett Ra reigned supreme. Unsatisfied with just one world at his command, Sett decided he wanted Earth to add to his collection. With his latest genetic concoction, Sett prepared to destroy the Egyptian empire, placing him firmly on the throne. But the humanoid heir to the throne, Ahmet, escaped to enlist the help of Leotsu, his grandfather. In a momentous conflict, good triumphed over evil, exiling Sett to a life wrapped in bandages.

The year is 1994. Humanity has lived free from the threat of Sett for many fruitful years. But for all these years, the Beast has lurked in the shadows stalking descendants of Ahmet. Finally, having abducted the boy Nezu, Beast can deliver a means for his master to return. While on tour with his team in Tokyo, Shaq discovers a shop full of antiquities. This is no ordinary shop, for the owner tells Shaq of the danger that faces future generations, and being a bit of a hero Shaq jumps in to help. Quite how slaming a few dunks and being tall will help, though, we don't know...





▲ *Certainly Sir, of course I can give you a light.*



▲ *Aurock pulls off a teleport punch.*



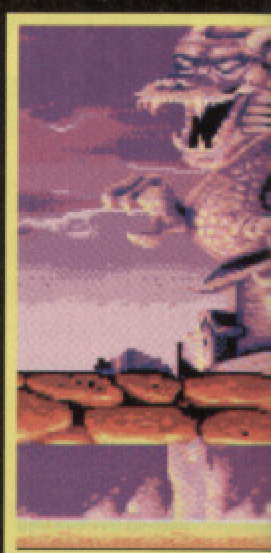


▲ *Shaq looks intelligently on as a lethal special heads his way. Doh!*

ATTACK MODE

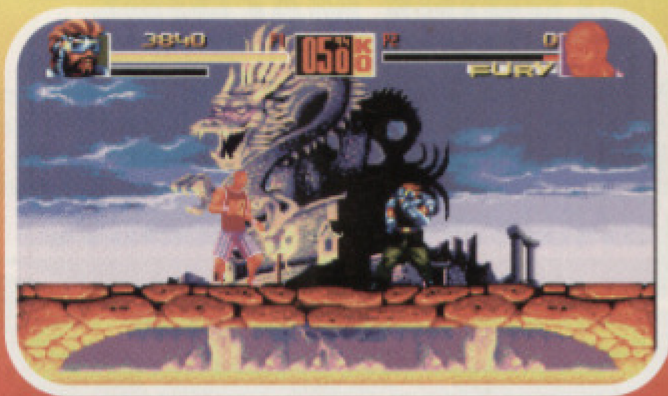
Aside from the 'Story Mode', the game can also be played in either Duel or Tournament modes. The Duel is the standard one-on-one where you can specialise and practise specific characters. In the Tournament, eight characters take an extreme dislike to one another and brawl it out until the best man wins.





FURIOUS

If you're feeling a bit cocky, you can taunt your opponent to really get on his or her goat. The more a character is taunted, the more hot-headed and irrational their fighting style becomes. In Fury mode the character can charge with added speed and force but significantly less accuracy. Beware though, as the target of your fury can strike back causing equivalent damage.





▼ *Sett's little helper, the Beast, lets rip a devastating energy blast.*



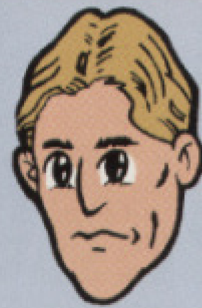
▼ *A double-whammy from the Colonel's power suit.*







COMMENT

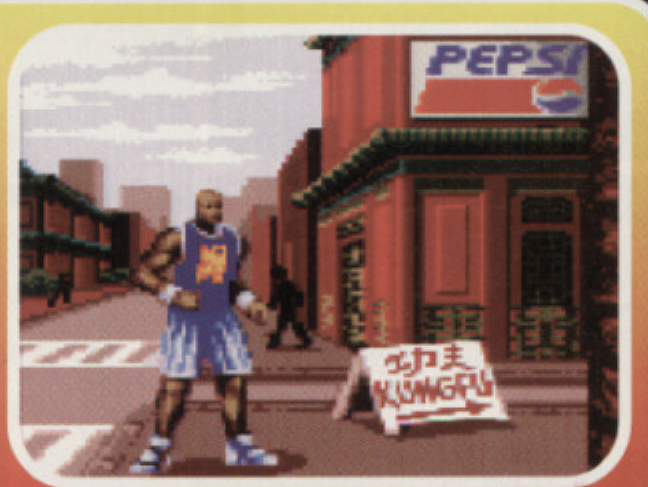


PAUL

From the outset, Shaq Fu is sailing very close to the wind in terms of the credibility stakes. A basketball player as the hero of a beat 'em up is not your everyday occurrence. But I have to say that any doubts in this department soon vanish after you get into the plot and action. Delphine have done a superb job on the movement and feel of the game. The characters are animated using loads of frames and detail, giving a more substantial feel than Conrad in Flashback. The backdrops have been meticulously designed, and even change their colour palette if previously played. But — and this is a huge BUT — the sprites are criminally small. And being so vertically challenged, the special moves can look rather pathetic. Similarly, whilst on the subject of specials, this is pretty much all the gameplay consists of, and bouts are easily won by repeating a particular move. As such, battles between characters often seem a little hit or miss and never seem to feature the same skill necessary in the likes of MKII or SSF. A good effort, but Shaq Fu loses out in the playability stakes slightly and is thus no real competition as MKII prepares to steal the throne.

HIS STORY

Shaq certainly has been set a tough task, and to think he was only playing in a charity match in Tokyo. After leaving the shop, he finds himself in the Second World, consisting of three islands, each of which are split into a series of smaller stages. From Temple to Mine, Wasteland to Gargoyle's Peak, Shaq has to finish all of the inhabitants before he can cross the bridge to the next level.



COMMENT



Polish immediately springs to mind when you first turn on Shaq Fu because, as we've come to expect from Delphine, the presentation looks as if it's had a good going over with Mr Sheen. The intro screens are all really clear and the in-game backgrounds colourful and detailed. A lot of work has obviously gone into the sprites as well, it's just a shame they're so small. I know Delphine wanted to go overboard on the animation so had to cut down the sprite size for the space, but what's the point of having exquisite animations (which this game has) if the sprites are too small for you to appreciate them? Playability-wise, on its fastest speed Shaq Fu really gets your juices flowing with its frenetic action, but the game relies too much on special moves — victory often coming by repeating one over and over — and comes across as quite wooden otherwise. There's a BIG programming flaw in the one-player game too — on EASY and NORMAL setting, you can beat any opponent by repeatedly pressing the B button. Occasionally you might have to jump as well but such a fundamental weak spot in the CPU player's intelligence shouldn't have been allowed to slip through the net. Apart from these gripes though, it's a good and competent game in two-player mode but far from a classic.

DELPHINE MACHINE

Renowned and respected for Flashback, the French programmers have now turned their hand to the beat 'em up genre. They have used an advanced version of Rotoscoping to digitise the characters directly from full-costume to animated sprites.





▲ *Machine gun for an arm? Whatever next?*



▲ *Diesel grapples with Kaori over the 50p on the floor.*



▲ *It's an energy cage for Aurock courtesy of Nezu.*



▲ *Shaq, you can keep your smelly old sports socks!'*





GRAPHICS 85

▲Spectacular character animation, and lush backdrops.
▼The character sprites are a little too small and consequently not so impressive.

SOUND 83

▲A good quality mishmash of techno and Far Eastern influences.
▼The battle FX lack meatiness.

PLAYABILITY 79

▲Fast, fluid movements.
▼ The controls are sluggish and the special moves take a vital split second to work.

LASTABILITY 80

▲The mixture of quest and beat' em up gives lasting appeal.
▼The special moves are few and far between.

VFM 75

▲A solid product, with plenty packed in.
▼But it doesn;t quite have the edge to make it spectacular.

OVERALL 79

If looks could kill this game would be Jack the Ripper but sadly the small sprites and some fundamental gameplay faults stop this being the classic it could have been.

IT'S HERE! AND IT'S HOT

Look out! There are some stray cats coming into the country! Some USA Jaguars have been imported into the UK unofficially. This imported product has been manufactured for America and is not compatible with UK Jaguar equipment. Look out for the UK sticker above on the Jaguar products you buy. This will ensure it is official product and will work properly in the UK.

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  On Cartridge - Worth £39 INC VAT

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1-2 PLAYERS | **16 MEG**

GAME TYPE
BEAT 'EM UP

PRICE	£39.99
BY	ACCOLADE
RELEASE	SEPTEMBER

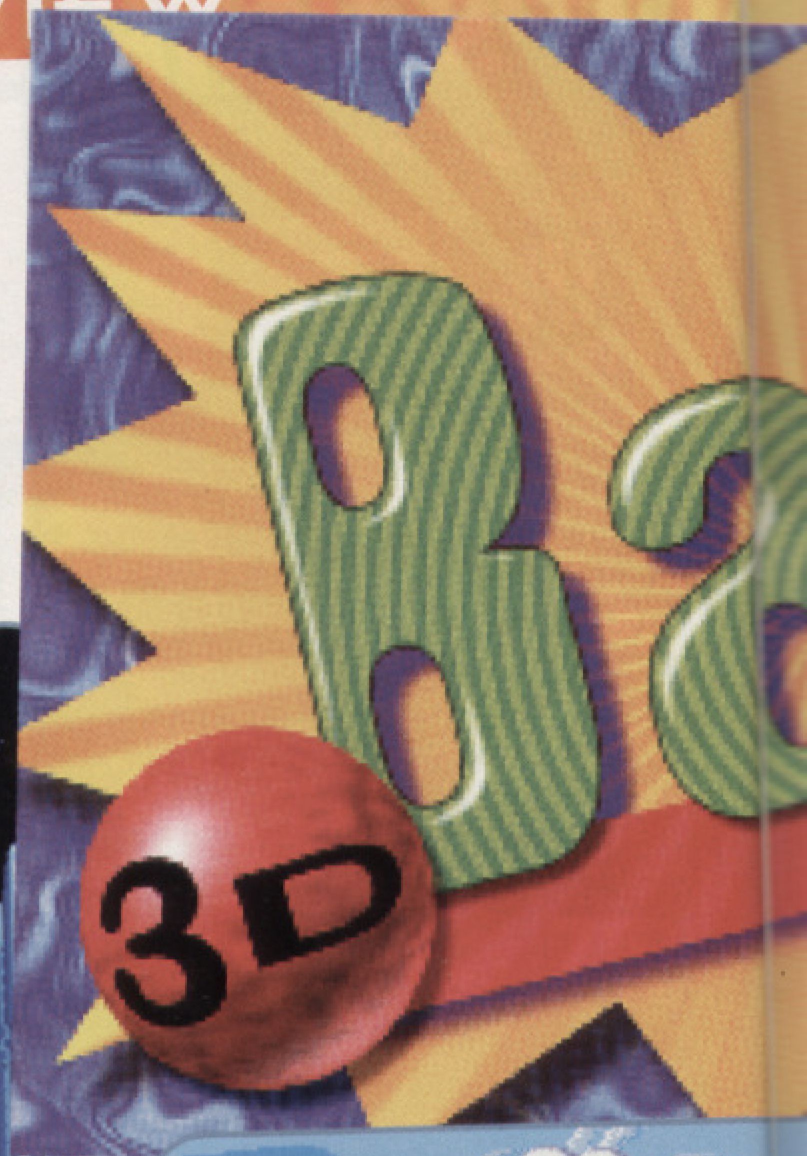
OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 5
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS: GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE
Reach opponent four.

ORIGIN
Ballz is an original interpretation of the beat 'em up concept for the Megadrive, but borrows ideas from a similar game on the NES.

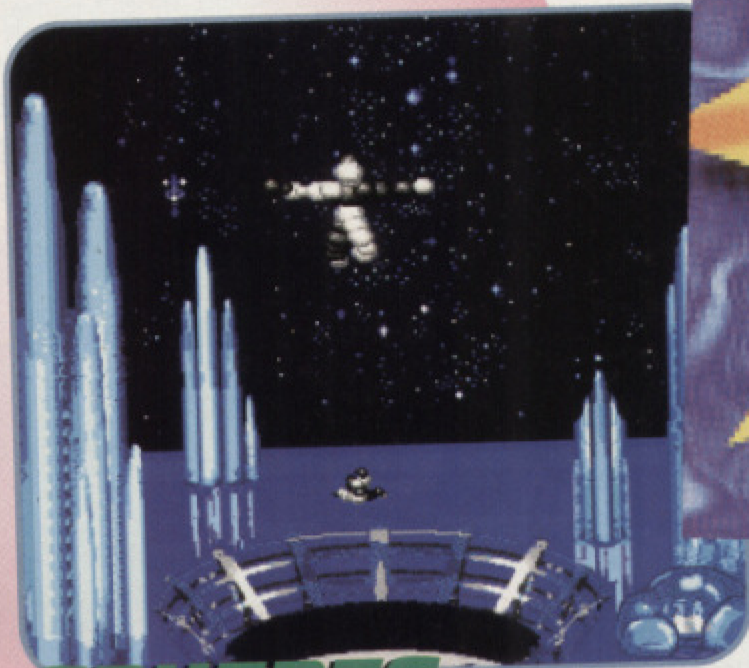
GAME BREAKDOWN
ORIGINALITY
REFLEXES
CHALLENGE
ACTION
STRATEGY

GAME AIM
Defeat your 12 opponents in the 3D arena by reducing their energy bar to zero. Face the Jester in the final confrontation.



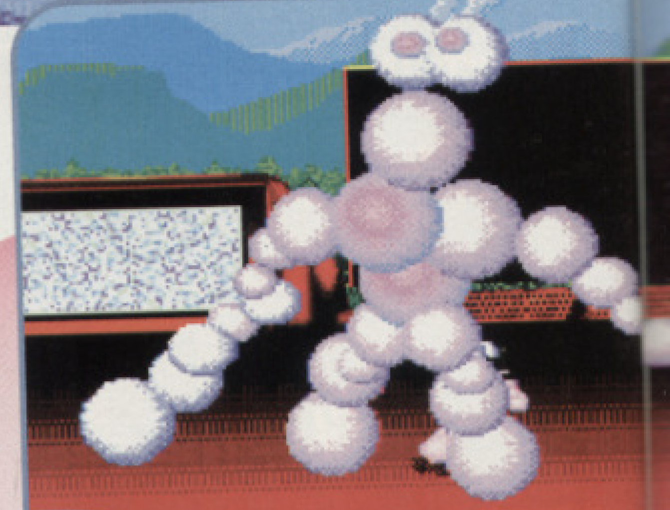
The balls are rising. Somewhere in the tortured imagination of their leader and mentor, Johnny, fearsome spheres are joining to form humanoid shapes. Warlike, with all the instincts of Cromwell's roundheads, these fearless ballz have balls in abundance.

Their mysterious captain, The Jester, invites you to play ball in a 3D fantasy sport arena. Each of the sixteen fighters are well equipped with athletic special attacks. An air of hysteria and menace surrounds the bizarre atmosphere of this strange ring, set aside for ball-on-ball combat. All laws of nature no longer seem to apply. Apart perhaps for one — survival of the fittest. The ball is in your court.



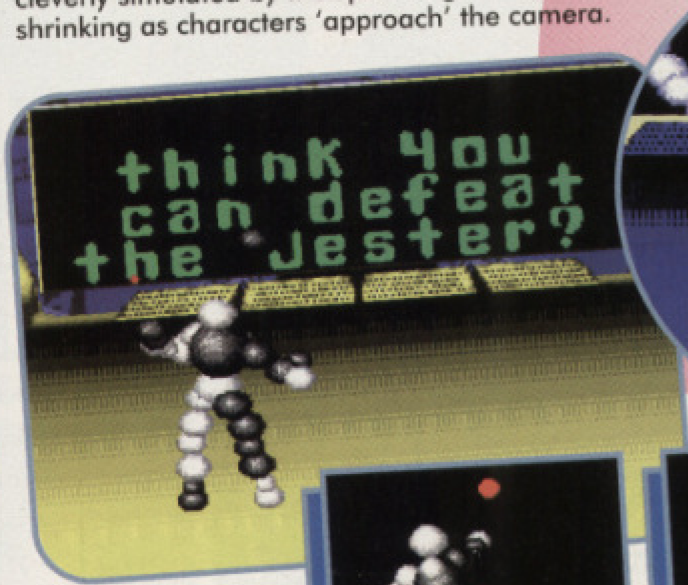
SPHERES FOR FEARS

The setting to Ballz differs from other beat 'em ups, most noticeably in the arena, which extends in three dimensions. As a result, the D-pad is used exclusively to work around this circular fighting zone, which is viewed from a camera angle which changes subtly to catch the best view of the action. The combatants, as you can see, are constructed from a dozen or so simple spheres, combined and animated into discernible characters. The effect of depth is cleverly simulated by the spheres growing and shrinking as characters 'approach' the camera.









▲ *Actually, now you mention it, yes I do...*





HY-SPHER-IA

Eight of the sixteen fighters are selectable by one or two players, the last eight being retained as 'boss' characters, much like the original Streetfighter II machine. Each character has around eight to ten special moves. Would you believe a pile of little circles could produce characters as diverse and idiosyncratic as these?





KRONK

Caveman or sportsman? The waddling dwarf with the club whose eyes are always on the Ballz.

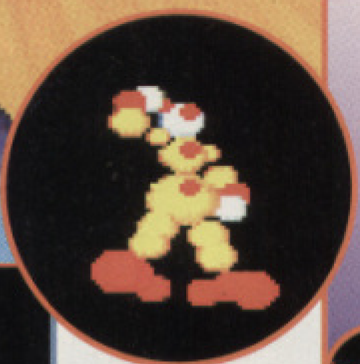
HIGHLIGHTS
BASEBALL BASH
TEE SHOT

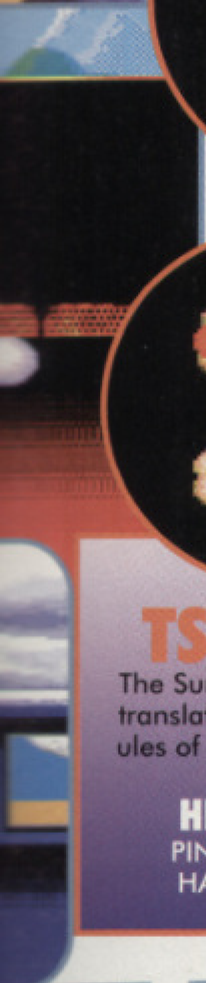


TURBO

Speed-balls. Turbo-charged doom spheres. Fast globes with the power to defy gravity. Frankly.

HIGHLIGHTS
BICYCLE KICK
CYCLONE BREATH

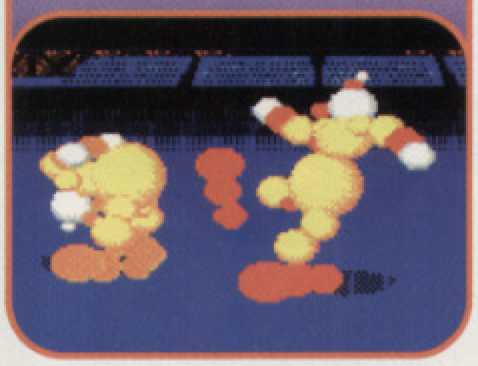




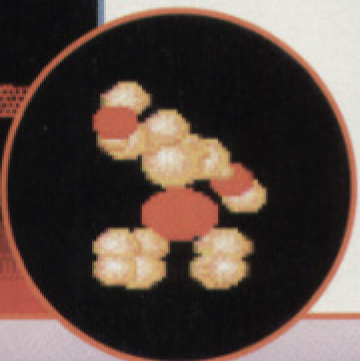
BOOMER

The clown prince of combat. With a clutch of crunchingly comic moves.

HIGHLIGHTS
COMEDY KICK
PROPELLER DROP







TSUNAMI

The Sumo spheres, which translates as big fat globules of heavyweight fighting action

HIGHLIGHTS
PIN AND PUNCH
HAMMER THROW







Lydia considered life without Mike and found it strangely enjoyable.

COMMENT



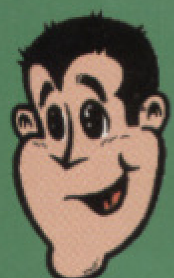
STEVE

From out of nowhere comes the closest thing to Virtua Fighter on the Megadrive I have seen. Sega's vector-based coin-op has been claiming a lot of my time recently, as it offers some of the most realistic moves and combos of any of its kind. Likewise, Bailz is an absorbing beat 'em up which is not only realistic to play (we're talking lots of little labs and combos here), but, more importantly, fun. The special moves are both good to look at and easy to pull off, and the added bonus of 3D rounds off this beautifully original slant on the beat 'em up genre perfectly — not to mention the brilliant action replay system. If I have one gripe it's that some of the moves connect when it looks like they shouldn't, but this never really gets in the way of the action. Nice one Accolade.

BIG GLOBAL DOMINATION

The fight's victor is entitled to control an instant replay detailing the entire last round. Amazingly, this can be rotated to be viewed from any point on the arena circumference, magnified, slowed down and speeded up, and even elevated to an overhead view. Also, during play, the monitors show pictures which often match your special attacks. Divine's bottom spank is marked with a howling mouth, and Kronk's baseball bash is followed by the appearance of a stadium.

COMMENT



GUS

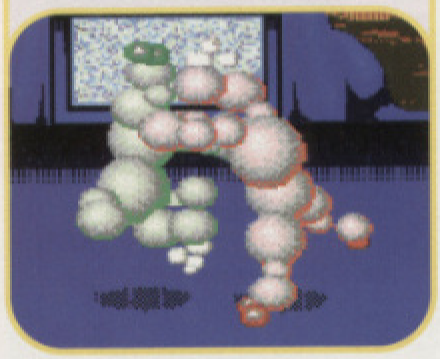
Ballz is magnificent. A novel idea for a combat game, beautifully executed. What the simple graphics cannot convey here is the wonderful animation, that instantly portrays real characteristics. When not actively controlled by yourself, the fighters shift restlessly, still according to their profiles: Yoko capers, Divine arabesques. In play, many of their moves are ingenious and spectacular, bottom spanks and tree-swinging replacing bland old fireballs and dragon punches. I can predict that new players will be frustrated for a day, thinking the actual game is 'hit and hope', but learning the characters yields results. Finding fab new attacks, like Boomer's self destruct lengthens the lifespan of Ballz. Play is fast but also fair, and skilled players can put in dazzling performances which are well worth watching on the replay system. The closest thing to Virtua Fighter you will see on an unexpanded Megadrive, and a fab, fab game.

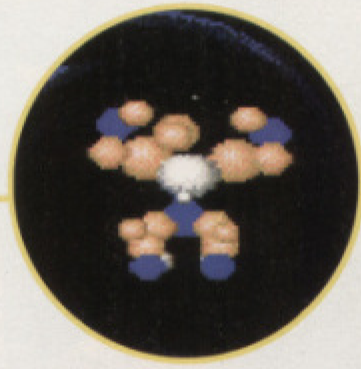


CRUSHER

Fearsome, most muscular of the orb-people, but not when his little horn balls slip off his head.

HIGHLIGHTS
HEAD KICKING
GORING MOVE





BRUISER

Ballz without brains, but plenty of brawn. Lumbering and slow, but don't get too close!

HIGHLIGHTS
TORNADO
HEADLOCK



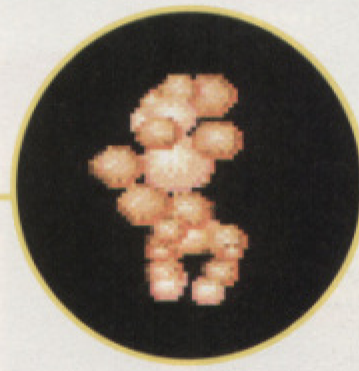


DIVINE

Is it a woman or a man with enlarged pectorals? The ballular anatomy of this dirty dancer is not that precise. Wicked specials, though.

HIGHLIGHTS
BOTTOM SPANK
LIFT AND DROP





YOKO

Hopelessly addicted to Um Bongo, which explains the extreme monkiness of his combat decorum.

HIGHLIGHTS
SCREWDRIVER
BONGO DRUMS





GRAPHICS — 86

▲ An effective method of simulating 3D by shading and scaling.
▼ Rather bland surroundings.

SOUND — 87

▲ The weird, vaguely manic samples really suit the slightly unhinged feel of the game. Good thump FX.

PLAYABILITY — 92

▲ Very fast, with a rewarding visual performance from your fighter.
▼ Some moves don't 'contact' very convincingly.

LASTABILITY — 89

▲ The two player mode is the best part of the game. It really is a gas.
▼ The opposition in one-player is not as tough as other combat games.

VFM — 92

▲ With other unoriginal sequels heading northward of fifty pounds, this has got to have an edge on price.

OVERALL — 91

Someone, thankfully has found their marbles, and created this demonic, surreal, wonderful game of Ballz.


MEAN
MACHINES
SEGA



1-2 PLAYERS | **16 MEG**

GAME TYPE
SHOOT 'EM UP

PRICE £39.99

BY ACCOLADE

RELEASE SEPTEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 5
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: AVERAGE
GAME DIFFICULTY: TOUGH

1ST DAY SCORE
FLOOR 4

ORIGIN
Following hot on the heels of the success of Doom on the PC, Zero Tolerance adapts this format to the Megadrive.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
Guide your recruit around the maze-like Space Station, High Rise and Basement, on a mission to rid the planet of invading alien terrorists

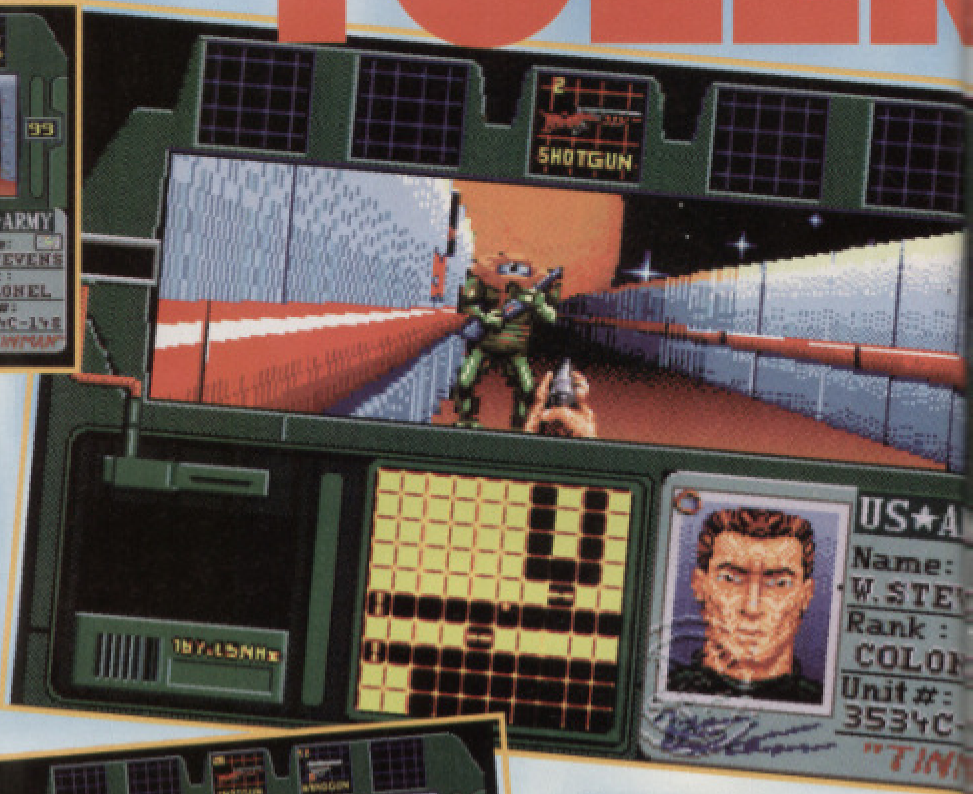
ZE TOLER

Picture a man. He could be any old Joe. A face in the crowd. But this is a man with a mission. A secret mission. A mission on which the future of humanity depends. It's a good job he's got some guns and stuff then, eh?

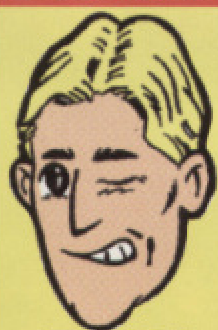
In Accolade's latest adventure the player is launched into a labyrinth of 3D perspective corridors packed full of aliens who want to pump you full of lead. As a Special Forces operative, an excellent sense of direction, the reflexes of a cat, (oh, and deep pockets to keep all of the stuff you find) are essential qualifications.

The scenario covers 40 levels of labyrinthian mayhem, ranging from the smoky depths of the outpost's basement, to the final battle at a location no less grand than the alien's space station. But beware if you have a nervous disposition, as you never know who lies in wait just around the next corner...





COMMENT

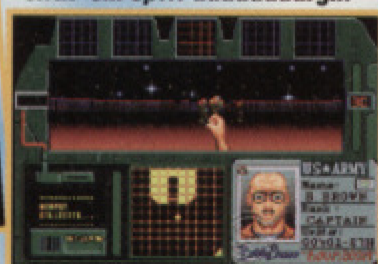


PAUL

At long last some fresh gameplay! Megadrive owners have been kept waiting quite long enough for this game format to hit the stores. And I'm glad to say it's a pretty decent effort on Accolade's part. This is challenging stuff for the Megadrive, and rather than try to tart up the graphics, using loads of memory, they've concentrated on the gameplay. There's great atmosphere and a real sense of the unexpected. Even when you think you've cleared a room, another little nasty jumps out of the woodwork, taking you completely by surprise. I was, however, a little perplexed as to the need for the stonking great ID cards on-screen, and disappointed by the inadequate size of the health meter. But these are only minor quibbles in a game that really is worth some investigation.



▲ *Okay bozo stick 'em up... I said stick 'em up... aaaaaaaargh!*

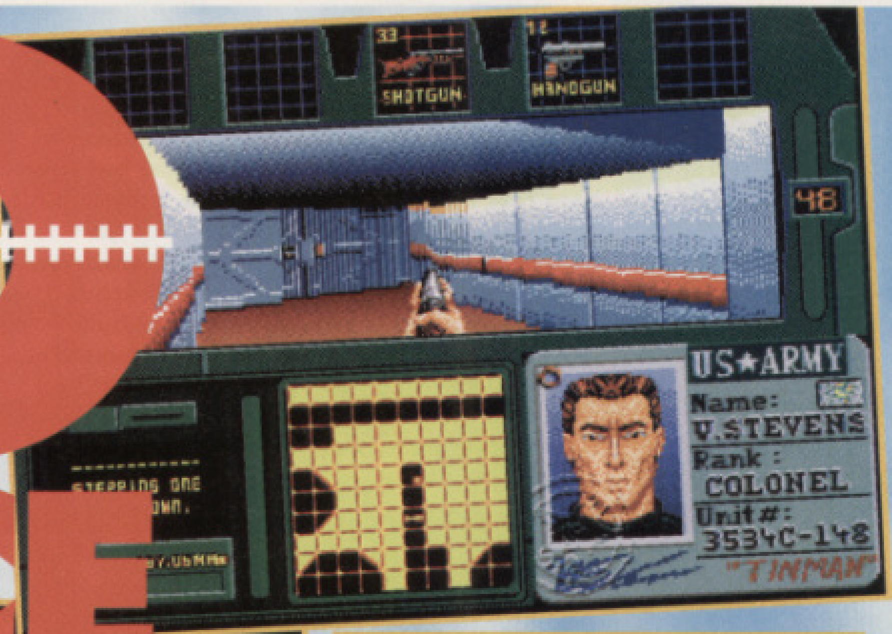


IT'S LINK-TASTIC!

In the fine tradition of Doom on the PC, Zero Tolerance also contains an option to link up two machines. Accolade have developed the cable that joins the two machines via the second joy port, relaying information about the other player's character. But beware, because in this mode there are double the aliens and the same amount of power-ups, turning it into a alien blasting free-for-all. With both of the machines running independently, the choice is yours as to whether you team up or go your own separate ways, but as they say, two guns are better than one.

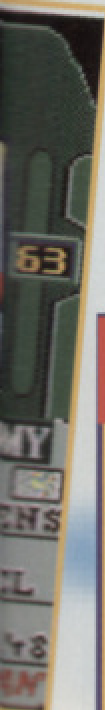


RO
RANCE









COMMENT



GUS

I'm really quite surprised how good this is. We're conditioned to think the likes of Doom are possible only on big PCs, but Zero Tolerance, while lacking the refinement of that classic, still conveys a great 'hunt and kill' atmosphere. Tension builds up as you skim the corridors, the graphics moving with adequate speed and smoothness to keep the whole thing playable. Nice touches, like recoiling corpses and blood-smeared walls make it appeal more, although Zero Tolerance has a scrappiness of presentation which is most apparent in the link mode — a fantastic idea that is woefully underdeveloped. Cooperative play is great, but surely a duel option could have been added? Enough gripes, though, about one, of the few original gameplay options for Megadrive owners this year.

THE SHORT STRAW

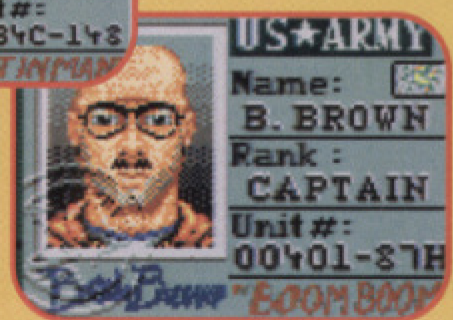
It's a dirty job, but somebody's got to do it, and these are the boys who are going to take on a whole alien invasion! There are five of them, but only one character at a time can be controlled, so when he kicks the bucket, in steps a replacement



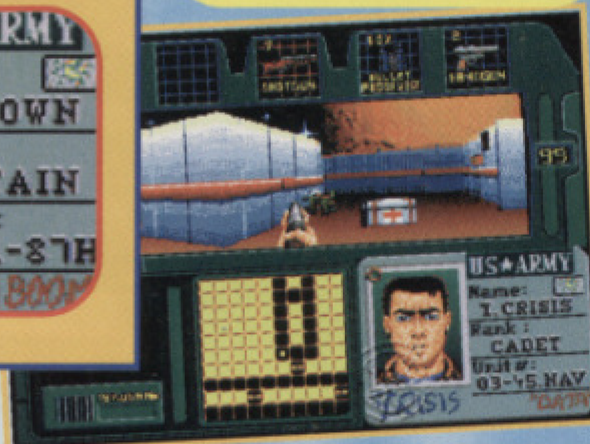




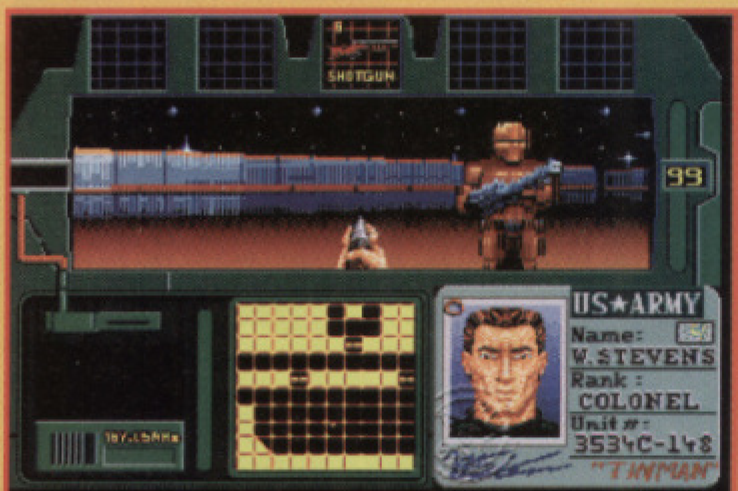


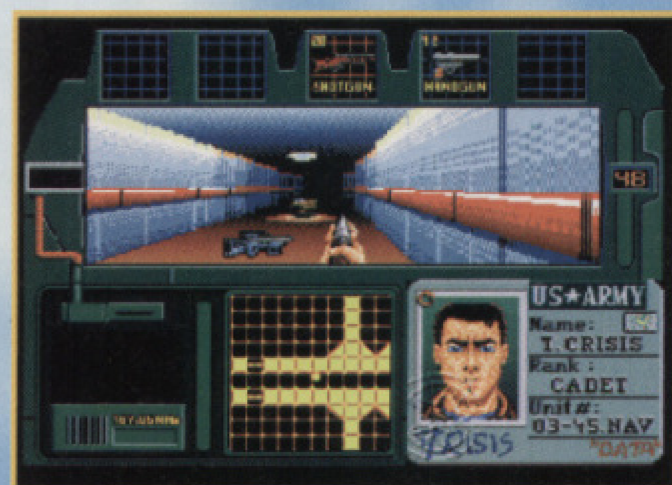


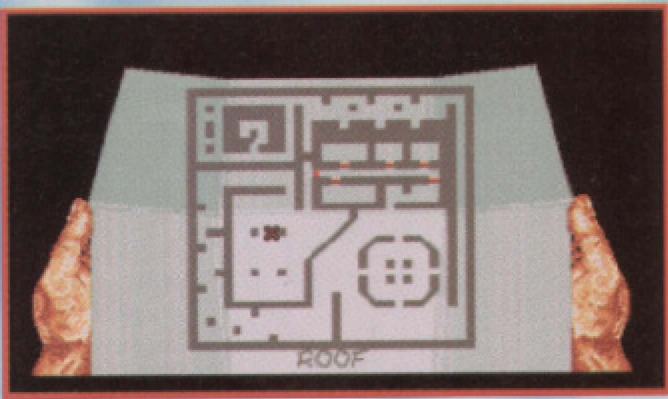
▲ ***Trained killer seeks attractive lady with similar interests for fun with a gun and possible genicide.***









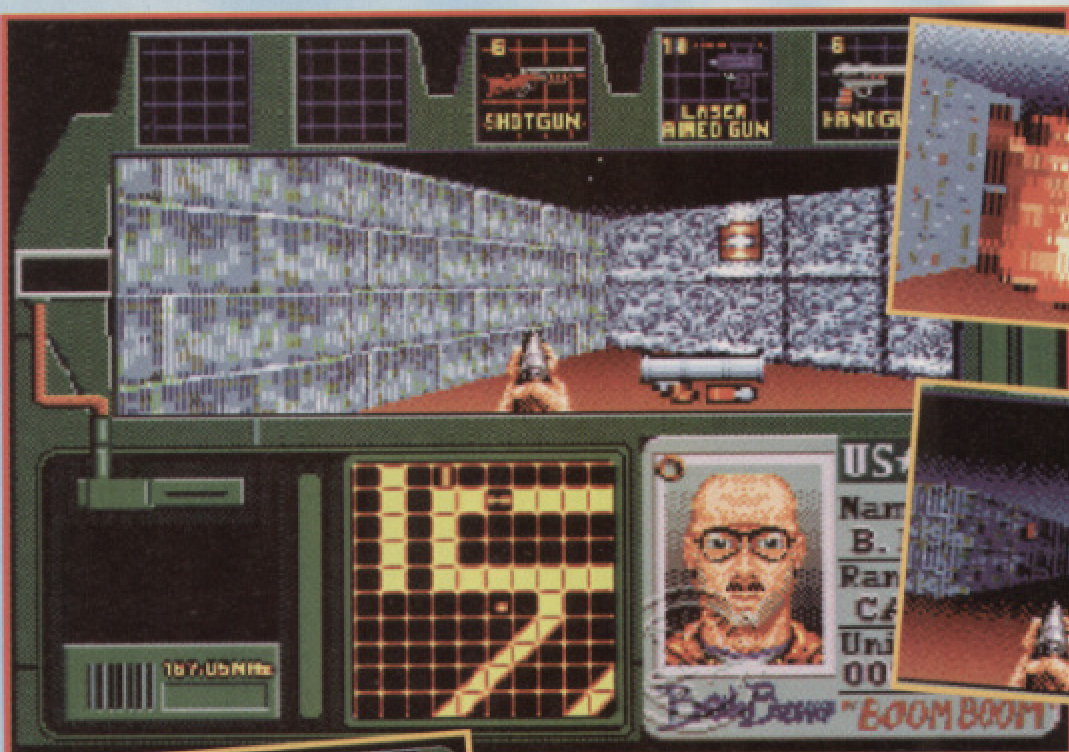




GUN FEST

You begin your mission with nothing but your bare fists to stem the enemy tide. But you ain't gonna get very far like that, are you? So before you get really stuck in, it's absolutely essential to get tooled up. Scattered around the various locales are all manner of bullet-spraying machinery, from the humble hand-gun to the mighty rocket launcher. It ain't all guns and glory though, as numerous obstacles have to be tackled with equipment found during the adventure.

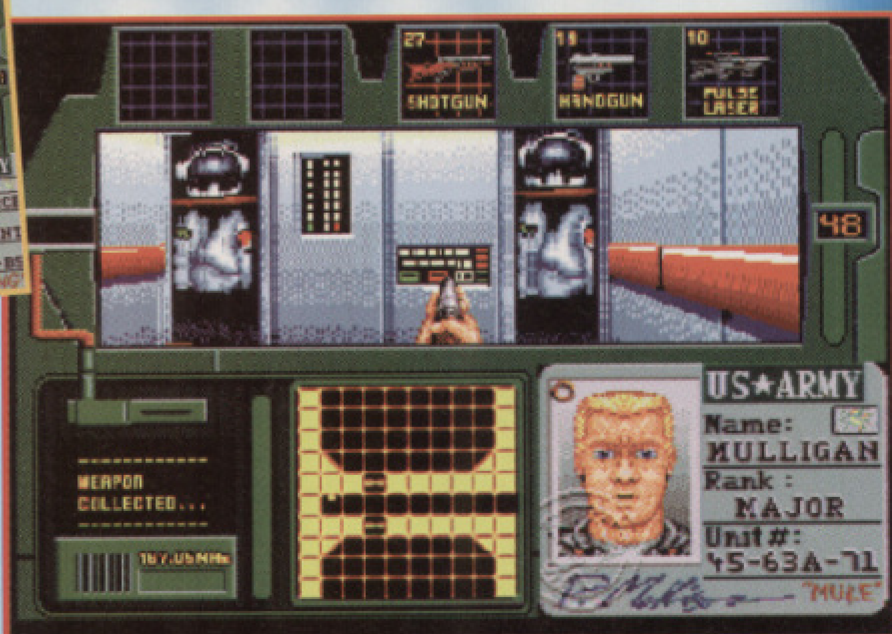


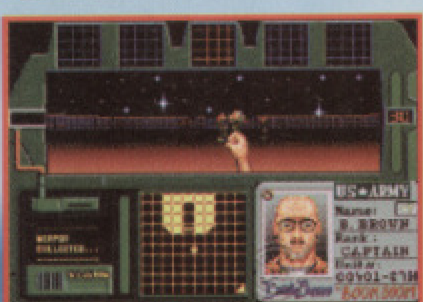












GRAPHICS 74

▲ Ambitious work, especially the texture mapped backgrounds, plus good use of the DSP chip.
▼ Sometimes jerky and c lose-up, enemies become blobs of pixels.

SOUND 80

▲ Some nice meaty FX for the guns and explosions.

PLAYABILITY 87

▲ Exciting gameplay with plenty of alien death.
▼ The control system doesn't allow sidestepping, and direction tends to drift left and right.

LASTABILITY 85

▲ With tons of levels and a tough difficulty setting, this will last even the finest recruit a fair old time.

VFM 88

▲ When you think of the cost of DSP chips, this is very reasonably priced.

OVERALL 86

A real kick up the backside for the Megadrive — machine link-ups! 3D! Whatever will they think of next? Revolutionary stuff and well worth a look.

MEAN MACHINES SEGA

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1-4 PLAYERS

8 MEG

GAME TYPE
SPORTS

PRICE TBA

BY EA

RELEASE SEPTEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: BATTERY SAVE
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: POOR
GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD

1ST DAY SCORE
Reach Tournament second round.

ORIGIN
Developed by Hi-score Productions as part of the EA Sports range.

GAME BREAKDOWN

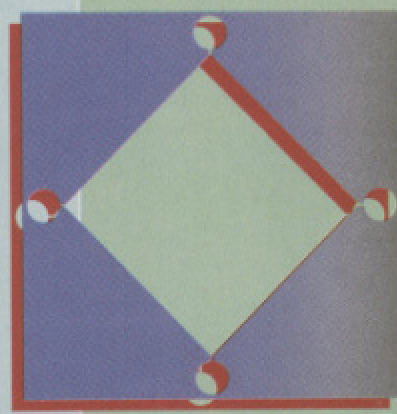


GAME AIM
Keep the ball in play within the court lines and above the height of the central net. Elevate to tournament status.



T is for tenacity: a dogged determination to persevere in the face of adversity. T is also for triumph: winning through against all the odds. T is the signifying letter of tricky, also. Difficult, demanding, challenging, aggravating.

T also stands for tennis. A royal game, steeped in heritage, and one with which the British have a love/hate relationship. This year we slumped to a new low: Britain's team slipped from the first division of the Davis Cup nations into a backwater of mini-African states and principalities. Chin up, though. The skills we lack at tennis, we make up for with the top video games players in the world, who can get their laughing gear round this little number.



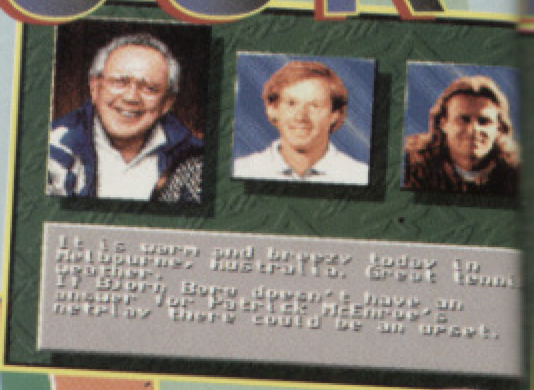
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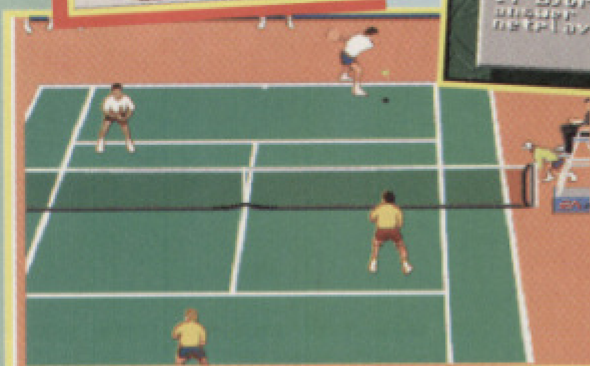
COMMENT



EA was always going to be fighting an uphill battle with IMG International Tour Tennis With Wimbledon over and done with, most people are now sick to death of tennis and Codemasters' timely release of Pete Sampras Tennis was a hard act to follow. Unfortunately this game doesn't cut the mustard in any department. The players are nicely drawn and are obviously programmed to move with fluidity — they do to a certain extent, but not unfortunately, in the direction you want them to go because of some irritating control problem. They've got some top players included in the game such as McEnroe and Lendl but none have any personality or noticeable playing style of their own which is a terrible waste. The electronic speech is appalling and the computer players predictable. This is mediocrity at its most average so if you want a tennis game go for one of the alternatives.







▲ *Everyone happy...*

SHOT ACROSS THE BOWELS

Tennis is played as a sequence of shots, each player attempting to force an error on the part of the opponent. The type of shot chosen depends on the area of the court it is played from. In EA Tennis, there are six initial shots, differentiated by tapping, or holding the A, B and C buttons:

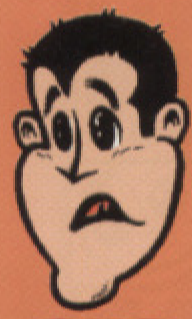
A (tap) DROP SHOT
A (hold) LOB
The drop shot falls just inside your opponent's court, forcing him to the net. There is a high chance of it striking the net, though. A perfect lob will go over the head of an opponent who is dominating the net.

B (tap) SOFT SLICE
B (hold) HARD SLICE
Slice shots travel high and deep into the opponent's court. The harder slice has more pace. They are used to pass a central or net-placed opponent.

C (tap) LIGHT TOPSPIN
B (hold) HARD TOPSPIN
Topspin makes the ball travel low and fast, and also difficult to return. A diagonal crosscourt topspin shot can be very hard to intercept.

IMG ATIONAL TENNIS

COMMENT



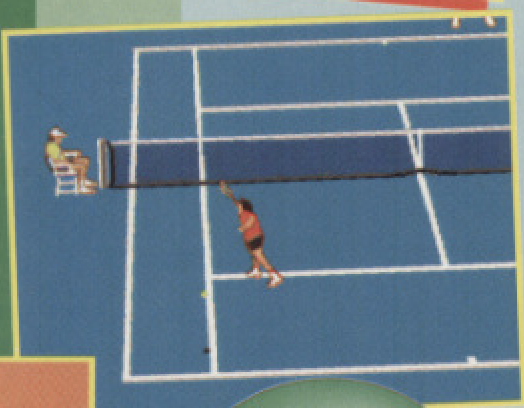
GUS

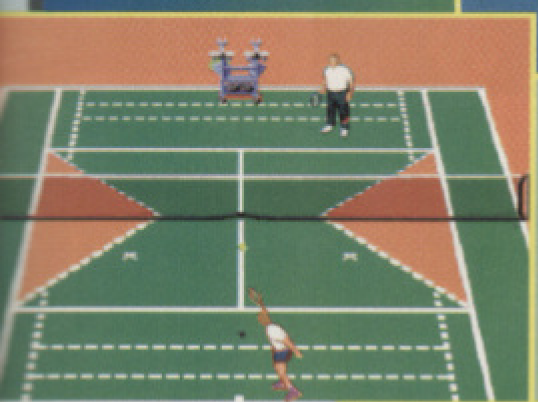
EA's tennis game falls way below the standard of the rest of the four-player sports range. When the label revels in its authenticity and comprehensiveness, some of the omissions are glaring. Where is women's tennis? Where are the stats allowing you to work out the good from bad players? Also, the programmers should be aware of the rule where a service strikes the net and travels over, bouncing within the service box. This should not be a fault. The game is a let down for other reasons. The players move limply, seeming to resist your efforts and their slow response to command ruins the game when rallies become brisk. Easy opponents are not calibrated by any subtle lapses of skill — they basically don't bother going for the ball, whereas the good players play a tiresomely predictable net game. There are alternatives which are more fun: Pete Sampras; and more realistic: Davis Cup Tour. EA Tennis, with its dalek speech and zombie-esque gameplay should be banished to court 14.



EYEFUL TOUR

There are 32 players to pick from on the tour roster, all of them real players from past or present tennis circuit (who can forget McEnroe, Borg or Vitas Geruliatas?). But you'll search in vain for any big stars of the moment, apart from Henri Leconte, or indeed for any women. The 32 encompass a wide range of skill levels, but the game gives you no impression of how they are ranked.

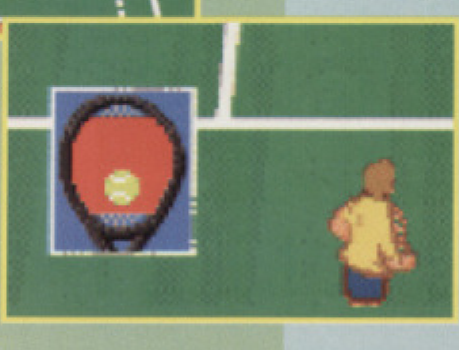




FEET OF CLAY

There are clay, concrete, grass and indoor surfaces which affects the speed and bounce of a ball. It's natural for players to have an aptitude for certain surfaces. The 12 venues of the world tour cover the range of surfaces.

▲ *Cut along the dotted line to make your cardboard tennis court.*



▶ *At your service...*



GRAPHICS — 69

▲ The player sprites are thin, but well designed. The presentational graphics are okay.
▼ The courts are bland and the animation unexceptional.

SOUND — 67

▲ The ball and racquet effects are very good. A range of Rob Hubbard tunes cover the menu screens.
▼ The speech is diabolical, entirely devoid of human character.

PLAYABILITY — 64

▲ Play is strategic rather thna reflex. A wide range of tennis shots are covered.
▼ The execution is poor. Play is unnecessarily frustrating.

LASTABILITY — 57

▲ The structure of the game means a lot of playing time, and there is the four-player option.
▼ Not enough fun to be a long term favourite.

VFM — 64

▼ Whatever the final price, you'll need to shell out for a four-tap: The Pete Sampras J-cart has one included.

OVERALL — 62

Well down the pecking order of tennis games, due to problems of control and playability, as well as lacklustre cosmetics.



PLAYERS	1
MEG	4

GAME TYPE
PINBALL

PRICE	£29.99
BY	SEGA
RELEASE	SEPTEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 7
SKILL LEVELS: 3
RESPONSIVENESS:GOOD
GAME DIFFICULTY:
HARD

1ST DAY SCORE
5,500,000

ORIGIN
It is only natural that the Megadrive's little brother should get to play with the same toys, isn't it?

GAME BREAKDOWN

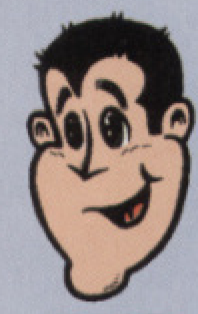


GAME AIM
Make Sonic curl up into a ball and whack him around pinball tables from hell in an effort to defeat bad 'ol Robotnik.

Bah! Will that evildoer Robotnik never stop plaguing poor old Sonic with his evil intentions? I mean how long is it since the poor boy had a holiday? But, as with any superhero career paths, being a blue-spined baddie-basher sure ain't a nine-to-five job.

The action follows the same track as the previous Spinball on the Megadrive. Old Mean Bean ginger 'tache has decided to sneak off to his holiday retreat, Robotnik Island. To keep out unwanted hedgehogs while he continues his dastardly experiments, he has installed a pinball defence system. But Sonic is undeterred and must brave the four levels of gem collecting and flipper action to go to the aid of his chums. That blue super sonic kid sure plays a mean pinball!

COMMENT



GUS

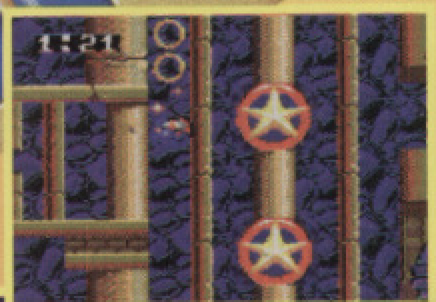
The Megadrive version was a flawed masterpiece, the Game Gear version's flaws don't seem to matter so much. It's cool. Sonic Spinball is a classy outing on the Game Gear, the sort of stick in and burn out kind of game that makes a train journey a pleasure and a lunchtime fly by. There are only four tables, but you'll be struggling with the non-stop nature of the action. The tables even seem bigger, probably due to the screen's smaller area, but I've no real complaints.



◄ *If only Sonic had booked with an ATOL approved agency.*











▼ *Poor old Sonic. It's an early Robotnik acid bath for him.*



TABLE MANNERS

The themed tables from the original Megadrive version have been preserved for Sonic's Game Gear outing. The Toxic Pools, Lava Powerhouse, and Machine have all survivded the transition — with a boss at the end of each. Only after defeating the boss can Sonic progress onto the next table. Also included are ring and egg-collecting bonus levels.



GOT SUCH A SUPPLE WRIST

To guide Sonic on his quest, the art of using the flippers is of prime importance. As with any pinball machine the position of the ball on the flipper determines the direction in which it will zoom off. Other pinball regulars, including power tubes and electrically charged deflecting blocks, are in attendance to give Sonic a flipping hard time.



MEGA GAME

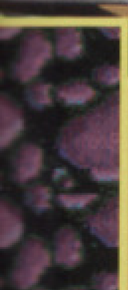


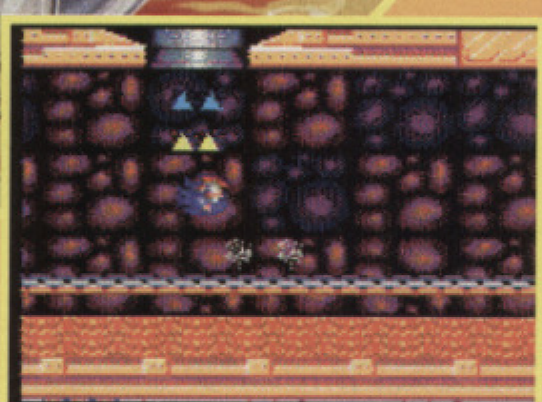


COMMENT

PAUL

Game Gear owners want good quality solid games that are fun on the move, and this is Sonic Spinball to a tee. Whilst it may not have the panache and quirky features of the Megadrive version, it does have everything else. The impressive speeds and scrolling are dealt with very well by our 8-bit friend. Similarly, the tables have been successfully trimmed and simplified to deal with the smaller screen, and all the humour and fun of the original version have been maintained. Admittedly the levels are on the sparse side, but my feeling is that this is more in tune with the Game Gear anyway. Game Gear owners have been crying out for this kind of game for ages. Buy it.





◄ Watch Sonic jump. Watch Sonic get the ring. Watch Paul scrape for a funny caption.

GRAPHICS — 91
▲ With plenty of depth, humour, and variation, the graphics' standard compares well with the Megadrive.

SOUND — 89
▲ Ace pinball tunes and FX that keep up with the action on the table.

PLAYABILITY — 91
▲ Fast, fun, and furious with a highly addictive edge.
▼ The later levels tend to be on the difficult side.

LASTABILITY — 83
▼ As with its predecessor it stumbles in this department. It needs loads more levels.

VFM — 89
▲ A good price for a really top handheld game.

OVERALL — 90
This is the ideal accompaniment for a handheld. A good, clean game format stacked high with Sonic frolics.

TAZ: ESCAPE FROM MARS



1 PLAYERS

16 MEG

GAME TYPE
PLATFORM

PRICE TBA

BY SEGA

RELEASE SEPTEMBER

OPTIONS
CONTROL: JOY PAD
CONTINUES: 3
SKILL LEVELS: 1
RESPONSIVENESS: OKAY
GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM

1ST DAY SCORE
MOLE WORLD STAGE 3

ORIGIN
Taz is one of Warner's Loony Toons characters, and has already appeared on a Megadrive platformer.

GAME BREAKDOWN



GAME AIM
As the title suggests, escape from Mars and the other planet terrains by finding the exit.

The little green zoo keeper was not a happy man. As custodian of planet Mars' only zoo, he was fighting a losing battle. The Daleks were refusing to mate, the Cyberman had a rusty cod-piece (again), and the Mysterons had come down with sore throats. Besides, people didn't visit zoos anymore. They'd rather go to the cinema and watch rubbish like 'Invaders from Earth'. Something had to be done. A new attraction had to be found.

The 'keeper leafed through his book of rare earth creatures. Under 'Hairy Antipodeans' he spotted an interesting creature with bushy eyebrows and a menacing leer. But they already had a Rolf Harris somewhere... But there! A strange species with the promising title of 'Tazmanian Devil'. He would have one of them, and from Mars there would be no escape...



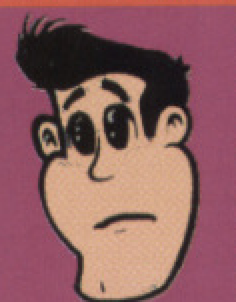


▲ L'escargot á go-go!



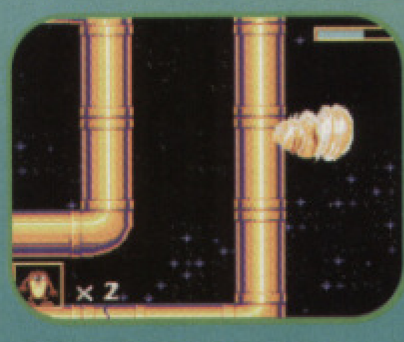


COMMENT



STEVE

Most players went through the first Taz game like a hot knife through butter. The sequel is quite a bit tougher, but that's cold comfort when a platform game is as cold and calculated than this. Everything is set to appear in the same place. Although you can whizz round the levels like a turbo-charged Testarossa, the sparse levels give the game the pace of a Reliant Robin. Graphically, it's still pretty, but not breathtakingly so. A rather perfunctory release from Sega.





YOU SPIN ME RIGHT ROUND

Taz's manic spin attack has multiple uses. Foremostly, it's an attack maneouvre. Striking most martians mid-spin defeats them, though some require several hits. Secondly, the momentum from spinning allows Taz to climb walls, or even to defy gravity and travel across the ceiling. Lastly, in areas of soft earth, the spin enables Taz to burrow his way to new locations. Spin also makes Taz faster and enables him to jump further.





HARD TO SWALLOW

Taz's method of examination is digestion. In other words, he'll eat everything he finds. Steer him towards useful objects like energy-giving birthday cakes and credits, and away from bombs and dynamite. Other oral highlights include the 'box of rocks' and petrol can, which project stone missiles or fire from his mouth respectively.



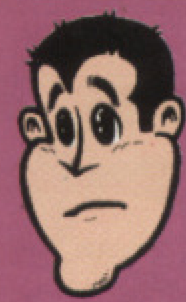








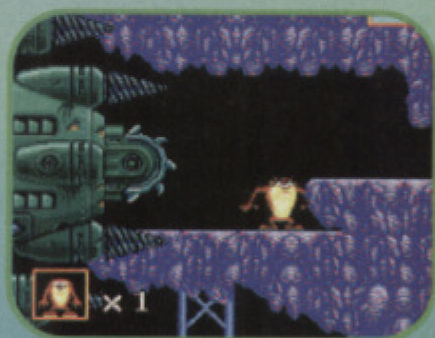
COMMENT



GUS

The original Tazmania was a big hit because it offered a new standard of graphics on the Megadrive. Two years on, the visual impact has gone, and although this sequel is harder, more inventive and better designed than the original, it suffers from being old hat. Not only that, but it's a bit of a chore to play. You're forced to think your way through each stage, but once the strategy to complete it is in place, you can traverse levels with your eyes closed. Only the bosses test your reflexes. By no means bad, Taz 2 clearly lacks the pace of Sega titles like Gunstar Heroes, Sonic 3 and other platforming greats.

▼ *It's the Martian channel tunnel. But sadly, this one is ahead of schedule!*





DRINK ME

Taz encounters some Wonderland-esque potions in his travels. These alter his size, either enlarging or diminishing him for a short time. A tiny Taz can't collect items or kill enemies, but can fit in places normal Taz cannot. Just take Big Taz on the rampage.

GRAPHICS

86

▲ As competent a portrayal of the cartoon character as you could hope to expect. Many nice background scenes.
▼ The first level looks a bit tatty.

SOUND

71

▲ All that parpy Tex Avery style music sounds sooo Sxities.
▼ This is the Nineties.

PLAYABILITY

72

▲ Some sections offer a reasonable challenge.
▼ The design is rather pedantic, slow-paced and not too much fun to negotiate.

LASTABILITY

70

▲ This will take a lot longer to finish than Tazmania.
▼ Like a dull guest at a party, your attention starts to drift almost imme...

VFM

75

▼ Those who want Taz on chip could pick up the original dirt cheap. Kid Chameleon is also similar at a bargain bucket price.

OVERALL

70

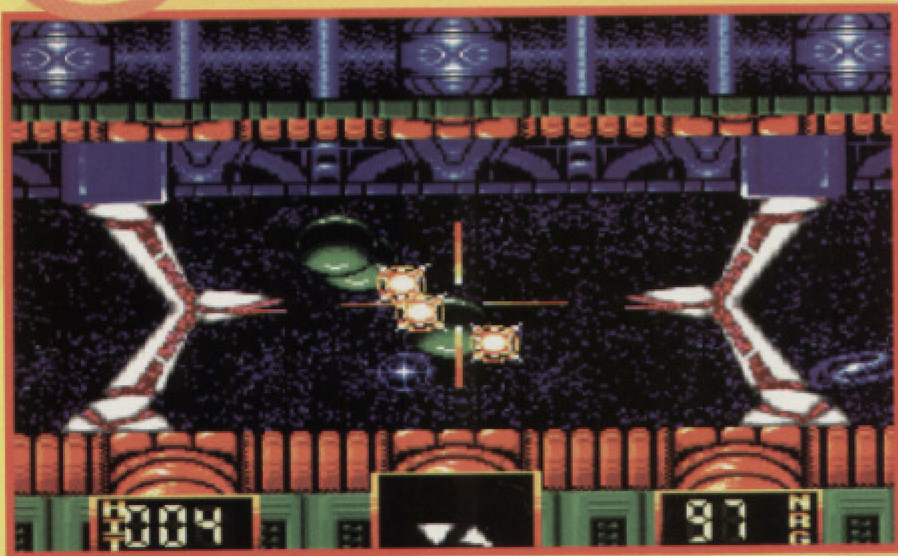
Not a bad effort at all, but in the jungle atmosphere of releases today, Taz just doesn't have sharp enough teeth to bite you.

1 PLAYER	4 MEG
PRICE	£39.99
BY	SONY
RELEASE	OCTOBER
GAME TYPE	EDUTAINMENT

fun 'n games

Perhaps the best and worst thing about being a kid is 'children's portions'. Picture a visit to the Little Chef, and imagine peering at the wipe-clean plastic menu. You always got handed the children's menu, and it was always small portions and boring things.

Now, when you're a grown up, sometimes you long for burger, egg and chips, instead of l'escargots and Cajun guinea fowl. But does the same apply to games? Can the simple fare on offer from Sony's edutainment package interest the average reader of the big words that appear in MEAN MACHINES?



LOOK AT MY PACKET

The package covers four broad areas. These are selected with a pointer on the options screen. You can pause at any time, and use icons to exit a particular section.

STYLE

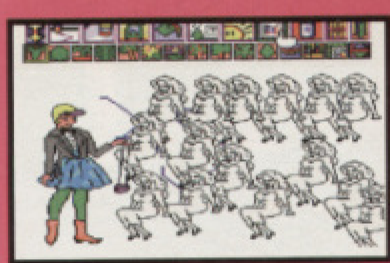
A bizarre inclusion, perhaps to add a balancing 'feminine' segment to match the 'male' games bit. It has two sections. Stylin' fun is basically dressing up a digitised dolly; Mix and Match is the old seaside game of making funny composite people out of a set of top, middle and bottom thirds.



▲ *Oh my God! Freak electrical charges have caused Gus and Lucy to morph!*

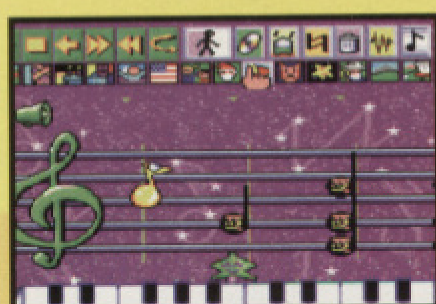
PAINT

A simple canvas and pen job, with a row of icon tools like shape fill-in, symmetrical draw, and pre-prepared drawings which perform the same function as a colouring book.



MUSIC

A simple, single stave music creation package, capable of producing short tunes with chords of up to three notes. There are plenty of sampled animal and tinkling noises, and a selection of pre-written tunes, most of which you will recognise.

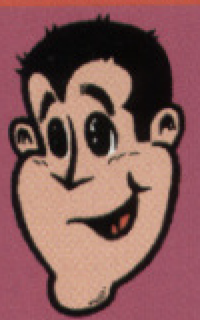


GAMES

Two simple coordination game. Mouse Maze is a simplistic Pac Man variant with cats and dogs; Space Lazer is an equally simplistic aim and shoot game.



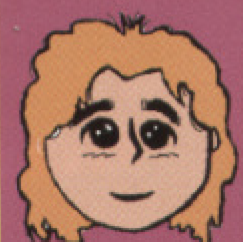
COMMENT



GUS

Notice how often the word 'simple' appears in this review. Fun and Games is devoid of any sophistication. Each of its segments would have no interest for an adult. But I doubt Fun and Games is of much use to a child either. The games part of the deal is already catered for by hundreds of other more exciting Megadrive carts. The 'fun' sections are all much fun to do in real life with real materials (apart perhaps for the music section, the strongest of the four). Whether that is marginally less tedious than the rest is immaterial; the whole enterprise looks tawdry and under produced.

COMMENT



LUCY

Okay, so this is for kids. But what age kid? I know four year olds who are better at "adult" games than most adults, making this product redundant immediately. Besides, it's dire in all aspects — the games are dated, the painting limited and the mix 'n' match pathetic. The music's okay but I'd still rather garotte myself than buy this.

GRAPHICS	32	Poor, particularly so in the painting section.
SOUND	38	The music section itself is limited.
PLAYABILITY	34	The games are awful, and the rest is not engaging.
LASTABILITY	23	Small children have short attention spans...
VFM	31	Could have cost a lot less and offered a lot more.
OVERALL	28	Not Edutainment's greatest hour, or Sony's for that matter.

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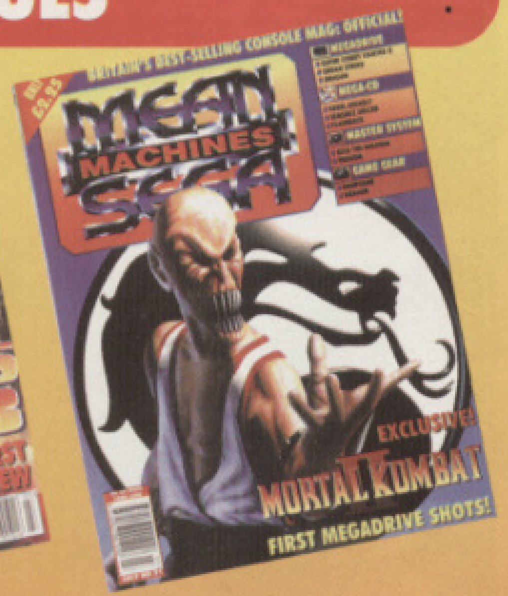
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1 PLAYERS	16 MEG
PRICE	£34.99
BY	MARUBENI
RELEASE	SEPTEMBER
GAME TYPE	PLATFORM

THE PIRATES OF DARK WATER

Based on the fab Saturday morning cartoon, the Pirates of Dark Water takes the three animated protagonists on a platform leaping adventure to save the world of Mer. The evil gunk, known as Dark Water, has risen from nowhere and is consuming the good and wholesome people of the land.

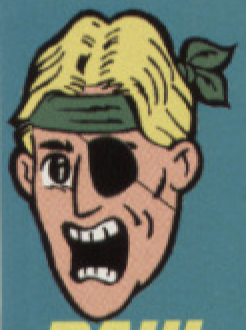
The only defence from global destruction lies in the recovery of the treasures of Rule. Unfortunately for our three heroes, the gems have been scattered all over the shop, and to make things worse, a no-good pirate, Bloth, has entered the race for the gems to serve his own mischievous purposes.

NIDDLER



The monkey-bird? Oh yes. A cross between an orangutan and a sparrow, Niddler is the guide to this strange and treacherous land. You can call on him to fill you in on confusing situations, or alternatively to give you a lift back to the start of the level, where you can select another more suitable character to finish off the level.

COMMENT

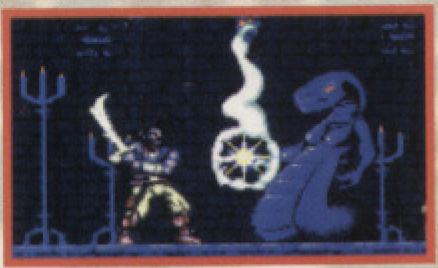


PAUL

I was an absolutely huge fan of the cartoon, which makes it all the more depressing to see such an average platformer come from an already great product. The characters from the series have been reduced to bungling level leaping sprites with clumsy attacks. Any lasting appeal is found in the fact that it does have a certain air of the cartoon. But once again it's a case of shoddy programming resting on the laurels of a license.

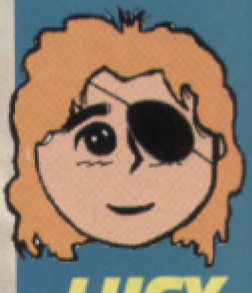






▲ *Tell me where the Jewels of Rule are old man or I'll pull your beard off — whisker by whisker!*

COMMENT



LUCY

Oh dear, mediocrity rules okay. I did actually enjoy this game for a little while but although it's graphically sound it's miles too easy at first, much too hard later on, you can only really progress when you play as Ioz as the other characters are crap, there's absolutely nothing new here and even at the cheapish price of £39.99 it just ain't worth the dosh.

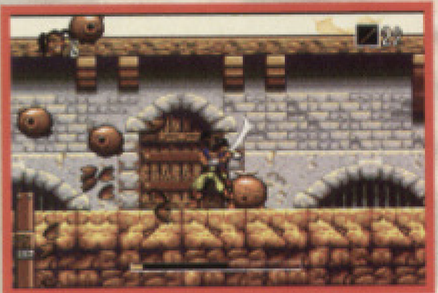
THE THREE BUCCANEERS







It takes a certain type of person to complete some of the levels, and this is why you have the option to control all three of them. Each has individual talents, Ren being the all-rounder, Tula the more agile, yet with less stamina, and Ioz, the slightly slower, but strongest of the bunch.





GRAPHICS 74
The presentation's loyal to the cartoon but the main sprites lack fluidity.

SOUND 65
Effective sound effects but what happened to the fab TV show tunes?

PLAYABILITY 65
The locations are varied but control of the characters can be erratic.

LASTABILITY 68
The early levels are ridiculously easy, then impossibly difficult in later stages.

VFM 65
A price tag that should be applauded. Shame about the game though.

OVERALL 66
Another original idea stuffed into the shackles of sub-standard platform action.

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MEAN MACHINES MEGAGAME - 90%



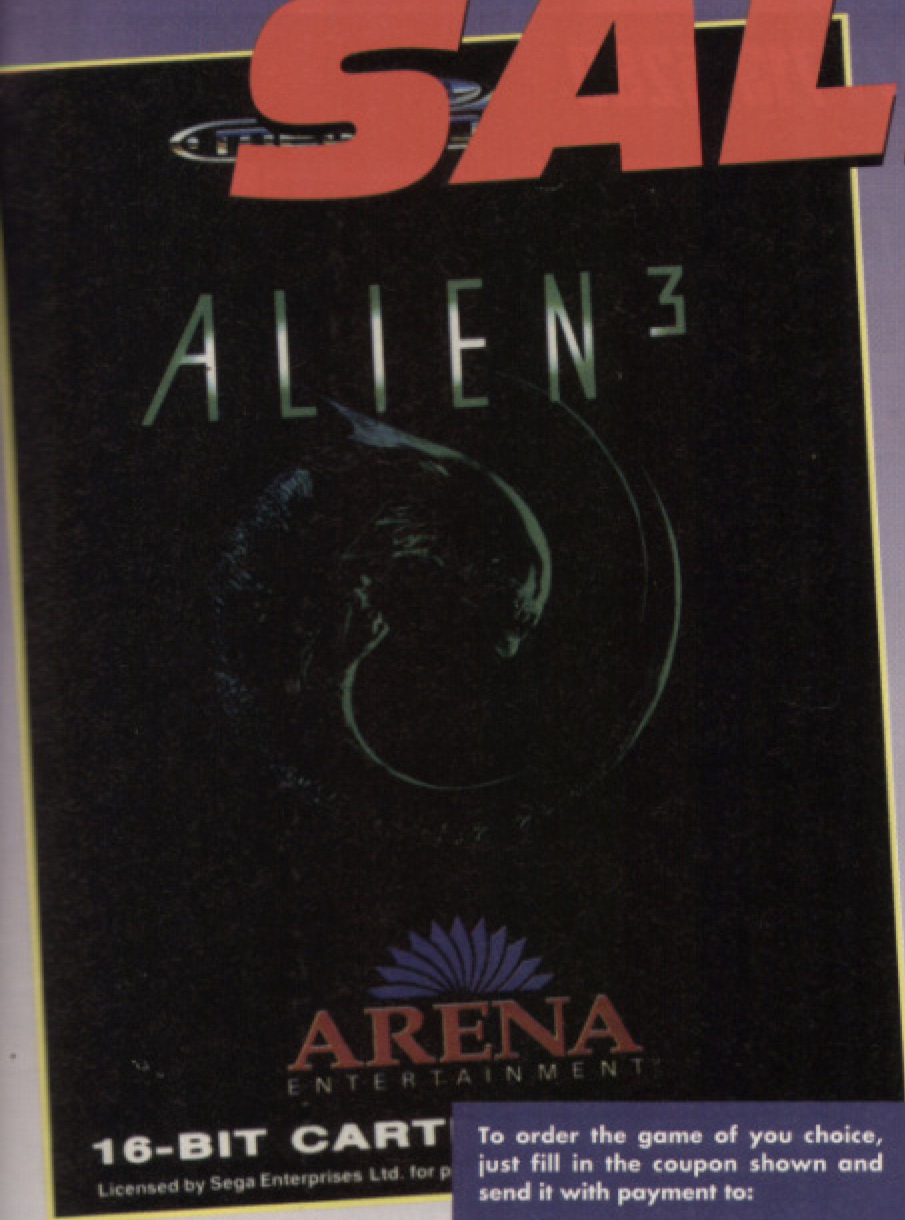
GUNSTAR HEROES

Treasure's superb two-player shoot 'em up ranks as one of the best games to emerge from Japan in years. A variety of stunning bosses and backdrops await your destructive capabilities as you battle your way through some of the toughest levels ever to grace a console. Featuring programming techniques which would make a Super NES owner go green, Gunstar Heroes is everything a blaster should be: fast, furious and frenetic...

MEAN MACHINES MEGAGAME - 93%

(PART 2)!

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X-MEN

Spiderman, Spiderman, does whatever a spider can. Cyclops, Cyclops, does whatever... oh, that doesn't quite work. Ah well, Sega's multi-stage platformer featuring Spiderman's uncanny allies may not be very poetic, but it does offer a tough multi-character level as the player guides their chosen X-Person through the game's baddie-filled levels. All your X-Men faves are included — including Wolverine and Gambit — and the levels and moves available to each hero are suitably varied.

MEAN MACHINES RATED - 88%

ALIEN 3

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MEAN MACHINES RATED - 89%

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We are two. Great, isn't it? Two years ago, MEAN MACHINES SEGA was launched with the promise of being the biggest and best mag covering the format. Happily, we've succeeded, and the figures show it — we're the best selling Sega mag of all. We know many of you have been loyal readers, and contributors. For you, and for others who want to catch up with history, and learn some REALLY behind the scenes stuff that was never meant to be told, join us on our nostalgia trip...

ISSUE ONE

The launch of MEAN MACHINES SEGA was presided over by Jaz Rignall and Richard Leadbetter. They both knew they had to get it right, and they were both cacking themselves. MEAN MACHINES was already two years old by that stage, and had been a wild success story. But with the launch of the Super NES, it wasn't practical to cover so many formats in such depth, so the decision to split was taken.

The Nintendo part of MEAN MACHINES became NMS, the world's first official console mag. MEAN MACHINES SEGA was to stay independent. This inevitably led to complaints from readers, who thought that NMS was 'biased' and that both mags slagged off each other! This was nonsense, since both mags were written by the same pool of writers.

The Editorial team at that time looks massive, compared to today. Jaz had been with MEAN MACHINES from the start as Editor, and Richard had been his Deputy for a year. Oz, our faithful Art Editor had also been with the old Mean Machines from the start.

The reviewing was handled by Radion Automatic and two whippersnapper staff writers, Paul Davies (who later moved to NMS) and Angus Swan. Incidentally, the Dep Ed of NMS was a guy caled Steve Merrett, but we don't know what hapened to him. Rad had arrived a year previously, when his cheeky cartoons of the team sent in to Yob had led to a job offer from Jaz. As 'he wasn't doing anything else', as he puts it, he accepted and MEAN MACHINES had a Senior Staff Writer.

The Design and Production side were just as important. Production Editor was Andy McVittie, die-hard Northerner (now Editor of NMS) who was always talking about Parkin. However, he did write very funny bits for the Editorial page. Oz was joined by Dave Kelsall, an ex-scooter boy and psycho-billy band member who had previously designed hot-air balloons. It should have been chaos...

NAUGHTY VIDS

The first issue, which featured Michelle Pfeiffer in black latex on the cover was a bit of a corker, it must be said. We never featured Michelle or rubber on the cover again, which I think is a bit of a shame. We also had a cover-mounted video, an unparalleled cover gift, which featured the most awaited game of 1992 — Sonic 2.

Inside we had loads of news for games which then took ages to appear (Jimmy White's Whirlwind Snooker, for example). Review-wise, there wasn't much of note, apart from a really dreadful Smash TV conversion for the Master System, and a horrible spoof sports thing called Aquatic Games. The strange thing about that one was that everyone became addicted to it — even though it was poo — and would have big tournaments.

SLAY BELLS

It was definitely the season to be merry as Crimble 1992 approached. Issue 2 was dominated by Sonic 2 across all formats. Both Paul Davies and Tom Guise (ex-Megatech now of Sega mag) were almost hospitalised by the game. Paul for his delirious enthusiasm and Tom because he borrowed the pre-production chips one night without telling anyone. Picture the scene when Paul Glancey, Megatech's Editor arrives in the morning to find probably the only set of Sonic 2 chips in the Western Hemisphere missing! Tom arrives late (not unusual) to get a mega drubbing. Ouch!

December saw Lucy join us as Dep Ed, after presiding over a mag called N-Force (now 'tragically' in that great newsagent-in-the-sky). And we were in the mood to party. Party One was the Sonic 2 bash held at Hamley's Metropolis. Abiding memories of this 'lavish launch' are: 1. Sneaking past the PR woman at the door who was like Edina out of Absolutely Fabulous 2. Oz getting Cathy Dennis' autograph (just as she was slipping down the dumper) 3. Dominik Diamond hosting challenges and being ignored. 4. Running out of food and drink someone using a megaphone to tell people to back off from the remaining sausage rolls.

"The first issue cover featured Michelle Pfieffer and black Latex. We never featured either again, which is a bit of a shame."

Then we held our own party: just 75,000 people at the Gamesmaster Live event. Held in Birmingham NEC (where they make Gladiators) it was a three-day event which left us utterly drained.

That Christmas issue was a 15 denier stocking filler. We led on Ecco the Dolphin, a huge exclusive on a game which blew Rich and Gus away. Add to that World of Illusion, Mega-lo-Mania and Streets of Rage II, and it really was the golden age of Megadrive software.

ROLL YEARS









THE NEW YEAR

As expected, things were a little subdued after Christmas. Because things were quiet on the games front, a silly controversy emerged at the time. Basically, some rival mags (many of which are now pushing up the daisies) were miffed that MEAN MACHINES were getting on so well with Sega, who were regularly inviting us round for tea and biscuits, exclusive reviews and previews, things of that ilk. This followed a policy that Sega enforced of not sending out pre-production copies of games for review.

Sega was worried about piracy and chip copying, which had happened with Sonic 2. For a time, if you wanted to review a game, you had to do it at Sega's headquarters. To be fair, this situation had been imposed on Sega UK from overseas, and they did everything in their power to provide decent facilities for us journos. They also NEVER tried to influence our independent reviews. However, various Editors, who were livid at our Christmas exclusives, tried to suggest we had been 'bought'. Rich scotched the tiresome rumour in his issue 5 editorial.

THE CRUELLEST MONTH

As spring 1993 fell upon us, the big news was the Mega-CD, which Sega kept teasing us with release dates. The machine had already been out in Japan for a year and a half, with not a great deal of success, so they were racking their brains on how to make it work here.

They marked the launch with

the new 'Pirate TV' campaign — an inspired set of TV ads matched by a bizarre poster campaign. The skull and cross-bones logo would become familiar for the rest of the year, along with the controversy surrounding one of its first games, Night Trap. The game was a corny but enjoyable aliens-chasing-teenagers romp, but the fact it used digitised video sequences got some Tory MPs and 'family campaigners' in a storm. MEAN MACHINES of course took a more calm view, and defended the game on BBC and ITV.

But we were to have our own holy roller debate with the emergence of Mrs Margaret Shelley, a mysterious, hysterical figure who wrote in to complain about the evil, satanic influence of games. Next month's mailbag was filled with outrage from MEAN MACHINES readers. As Yob said: "Mrs Shelley has certainly stirred up a hornet's nest. Now she can sit on it". But little more has been heard from mad Shelley and her Campaign to ban video games since.

Further celebrity status came with a guest appearance by an emerging north London band, East 17, who came in to challenge the staff. Terry and Brian were good enough lads, but strangely kept big parkas and ski-hats on for the whole time they were at the office. They told us over a drink that they enjoyed 'the birds and the holidays' (they were about to go off to Hawaii). Then their car came.

SUMMER LOVIN'

The summer of 1993 was surprisingly fruitful for games: Shining Force, Cool Spot, X-Men, Land of Illusion and, of course, Jungle Strike rolled through the review process. MEAN MACHINES was also putting together its Turbo TIps video, which proved to be sheer torture for Paul and Gus (Rad had now left the mag to work on NMS)

At that time Rad, Gus, Paul and Tom Guise were shipped off do some training in Peterborough. It was like going back to school for three days, making boring pencil marks in the margins of photocopies. The boys worried themselves with whether the company would pay their meals if they ordered á la carte and emptied the mini-bar, and just what exotic range of channels the cable TV offered.

BANANA SPLITZ

The run up to Christmas 1993 was both exciting and stressful. Mortal Kombat and Streetfighter II were slugging it out for the beat 'em up crown. Most other mags were beguiled by Acclaim's marketing, but we came down on the side of Streetfighter, and later on most admitted we were right. However, witness the recent rematch...

Rich had been disappearing for days on end with Jaz and the rumour was a new project. It became Sega Magazine, an ambitious new launch that would complement MEAN MACHINES and seal an official relationship with Sega.

All well and good, but what about back at the ranch! The MEAN MACHINES platoon had been reduced to just Lucy, Gus and Oz, as Paul Davies moved to NMS, Rich took Sega Mag, and Jaz announced a shock departure to move to California and work for Virgin Interactive.

Putting out the 148-page Christmas issue under this pressure was taxing, but we were justly proud of the result, emblazoned with a world exclusive of Toejam and Earl 2, one of the best platformers of the year. And then, on the week before Christmas, Megatech was sold.

The decision was a shock and a surprise. But a small readership, meant the team's talents could be used more profitably. From the Editor's seat came Steve Merrett, who assumed Rich's old position, while Tom went to cause trouble at Sega Magazine. The new magazine was launched at a glittering do at a posh west London club (so glittering we had to wait in the pub next door eating cheese rolls and pasties while they got ready). It was the cop off event of the year.

SINCE THEN

The Christmas period was a bruising time for Sega and Nintendo, it transpired. A lot of people moved on from their jobs in the early part of the year. Other mags were being gloomy and snipy, printing 'Is the games boom over?' articles. Instead we chose to be upbeat — Konami's awaited Castlevania game, Streets of Rage III, Sonic 3 and Virtua Racing with its SVP chip, showed that game development was very much alive. And don't forget NBA Jam, which was launched at a basketball party in a north London warehouse, where guest 'celebs' Bad Boys Inc, demonstrated they play basketball as well as they sing (ie tragically).

But the first quarter of the year was also a time of mounting excitement surrounding the new 32-bit systems. First the finished specs of the Saturn, and then the surprise announcement of Megadrive 32X. We were in on both, and we'll be there to cover this next generation, as MEAN MACHINES goes into its next two years. Stay with us.





THE HAIR-CUTS OF HICKMAN

forget Elizabeth Hurley, indeed forget Elizabeth Taylor. The most ruthless adaptor of image is our own Lucy Hickman, Associate Editor. This brief follicular showcase, demonstrates the agony and the ecstacy; the triumph and the disaster.







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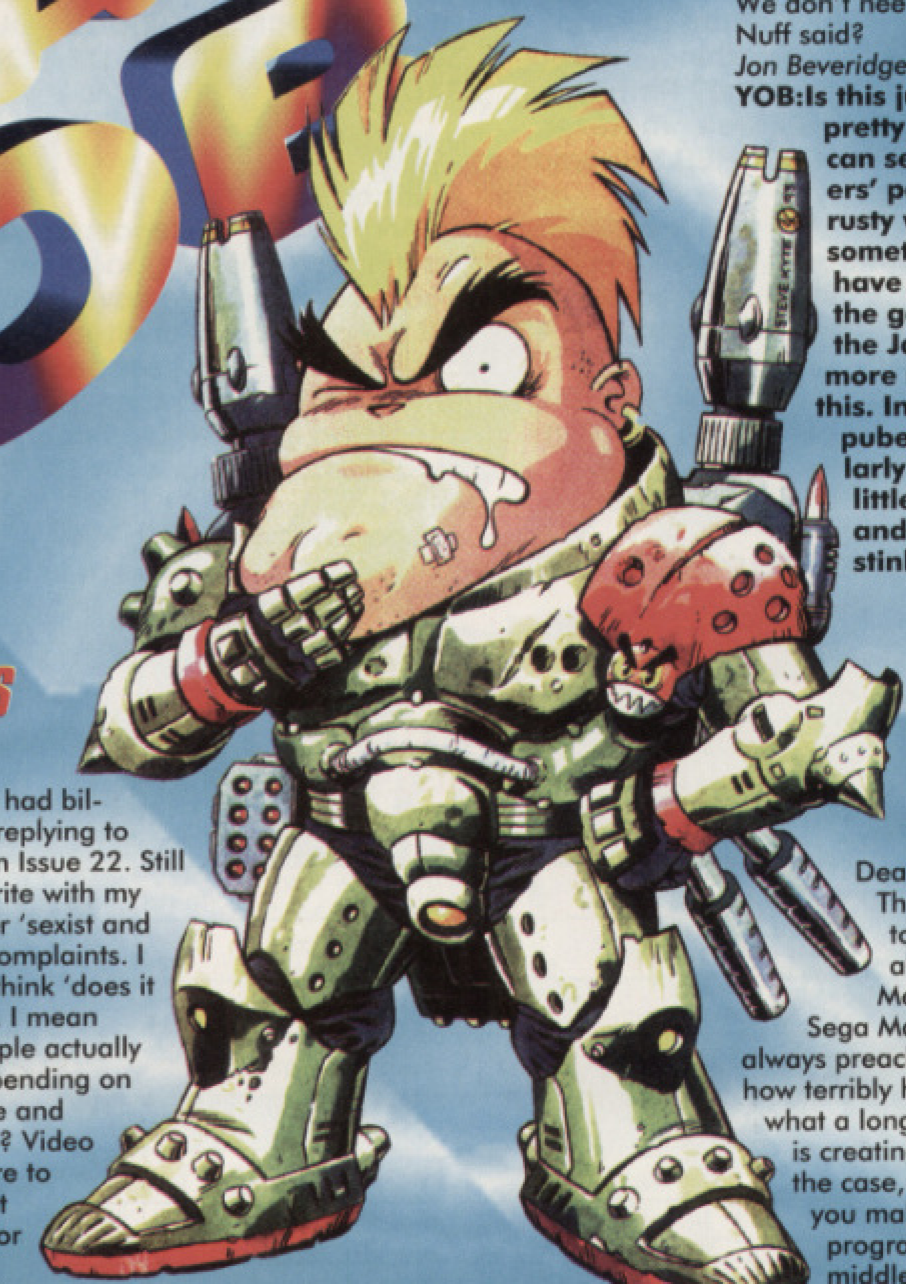
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PLEASE SEE PAGE 94 FOR MEGAMART

MEAN YOB



I've just got time to answer a few of your snotty scumrags before pushing off for a few weeks in Benidorm, leaving the rest of the team to collapse with asthma in London. By the way, thanks whoever sent me the bogie collection — most tasty. Before I go, I'll tell you about the new government bill I'm sponsoring as member for Birch'em and Hanghimhigh. It outlaws all those previously sneaky acts you think you can get away with — like leaving a log floating in a train karsi or farting under a continental quilt and wafting it up by lifting your legs. Sundry offences will be tried with the blanket punishment of an enema delivered with a tent peg and sprayed with Impusle 'Avant Garde'. That one was dedicated to all you Silvkrin drinkers out there. If you've got anything for YOB, send it to BACK DOOR DEALINGS, YOB'S MAILBAG, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

FREE RADICALS

Dear Yob
I expect you've had billions of letters replying to Tanya's letter in Issue 22. Still I thought I'd write with my thoughts on her 'sexist and homophobic' complaints. I can't help but think 'does it really matter?'. I mean how many people actually buy games depending on who you rescue and how they dress? Video games are there to be enjoyed, not as a platform for political arguments. Of course discrimination can creep in. For example Dee Jay in SSF 2 is just a stereotype Jamaican, always smiling, as if. But Tanya, how many game share storylines about killing the impending onslaught of Gay Rights activists? Sega and Nintendo seem to be fair companies, but at the end of the day, they are in business and want to make money. So while homosexuality is still very much a minority, it's bound to take a back seat in games development. Not because developers are fascist homophobic gits, but because right now the demand for gay heroes simply doesn't exist. Anyway where does it suggest that Ryu and Chun-Li are actually straight? What I really want to say is, sit down, chill out, and enjoy the games. We don't need this squabbling. Nuff said?
Jon Beveridge, Hastings
YOB:Is this just me, or is this pretty irrelevent? All I can see are a few readers' pants filling with rusty water about something that doesn't have any relevence to the gameplay. I think the Japanese are a lot more relaxed about this. In their games, pubescent girlies regularly get the hots for little furry creatures and no one kicks up a stink about that.


▲ *By Golly, it's Ranger-X in his shiny livery. Hi ho Mawgan Pengelly, Plymouth!*

NANO-SPHERE COMPLEX

Dear Yob
This isn't really a letter to you, but rather to all the employees of Mean Machines and Sega Mag. You people are always preaching to us about how terribly hard you work, and what a long and arduous task it is creating a mag. If this is the case, then explain why you make references to TV programmes on in the middle of the day (eg. The Mighty Morphing Power Rangers). Also how do you test entries for the Vinyl Insult? I reckon you spend half of your time slouching, watching TV, and listening to music.
Bradley, Milton
YOB:The compulsory working day starts with Anne and Nick, A Country Practice and we try and catch that 'Scene' Schools' programme on sex education whenever it's on. Funnily enough, we test the 'Vinyl Insult' CDs on Gus' Multi-media Mac CD, log pants.

WRINKLE CONTROL

Dear Yob
I think your mag is completely fab. I think it is so good that you are worthy enough to give me a copy of Virtua Racing.
Chris Dalgliesh, Dumfrieshire
YOB:I'd rather reem a rodent, Senor, than geev you a free game.



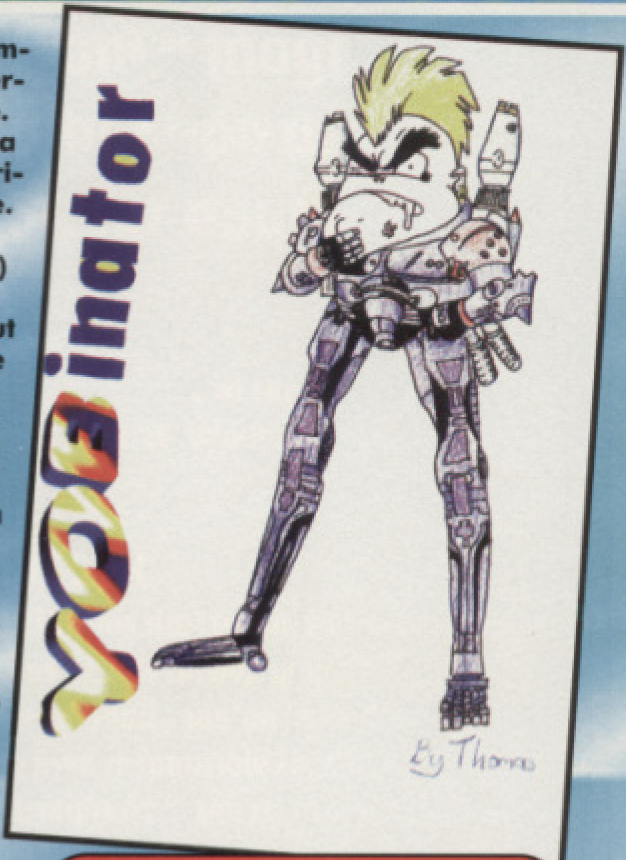
▲ They're coming! Have you read the review book yet, Kwung Yu Ho of Utrecht, Netherlands?

FRUITY ACIDS

Dear Yob
I'm a bit confused regarding the number of different machines Sega are releasing. Okay, there's the Saturn, Megadrive 32, Mars, CDX, and God knows what else. I know Sega are trying to take the initiative in bringing us the latest technology, but personally I think they should set their sights on one machine. In doing so, they could spend considerable time developing the ultimate games system, instead of releasing pointless add-ons that are going to be superceded in less than a year. I believe this can best be described in a 'cryptic' sort of way. Let's imagine that 16-Bit technology is based on the third step of a staircase, and that 32-bit technology is based on the sixth step. Well what Sega are trying to do in order to bridge the gap, is take one step at a time, but are charging the consumer substantial amounts of money for the privilege. Take the Mega-CD, not quite 32-bit technology is it? Yet Sega are prepared to charge £270 for a limited add-on. Now to climb the next step, another add-on is on the way. This boasts 32-bit technology, but not quite Saturn quality. What's more, to lure existing Mega-CD owners, Sega claim this add-on will offer VHS quality FMV. In contrast, Nintendo intend to progress to beyond the sixth step with 64-bit technology without any 'in-between' malarkey, and it only costs £200. What are Sega playing at?
Christopher Quigley, Co. Armagh
YOB:Are you this Chris Quigley from my old school? We called him 'Christi-flairs' because of his sad crimplene legwear. You certainly sound the same. Oh well, basically Sega owners have that horrible thing called choice. They can have Megadrives, (cheaper) Mega-CDs and now a 32-bit upgrade without having to shell out the £500 the Saturn is expected to cost. How dreadful! I'm sure the majority would much rather sit waiting on a bent finger like you for machines that have no actual screenshots or even a finished design. It's a bit like choosing to go to Spain on holiday now, or sitting tight until flights to Venus become available.



▲ John Wallace, Cambuslang, has got the right formula



▲ Oh grandma, what long legs you have. Drawn by Thomas Tumey, Tarporley.

VISIBLY SMOOTHER

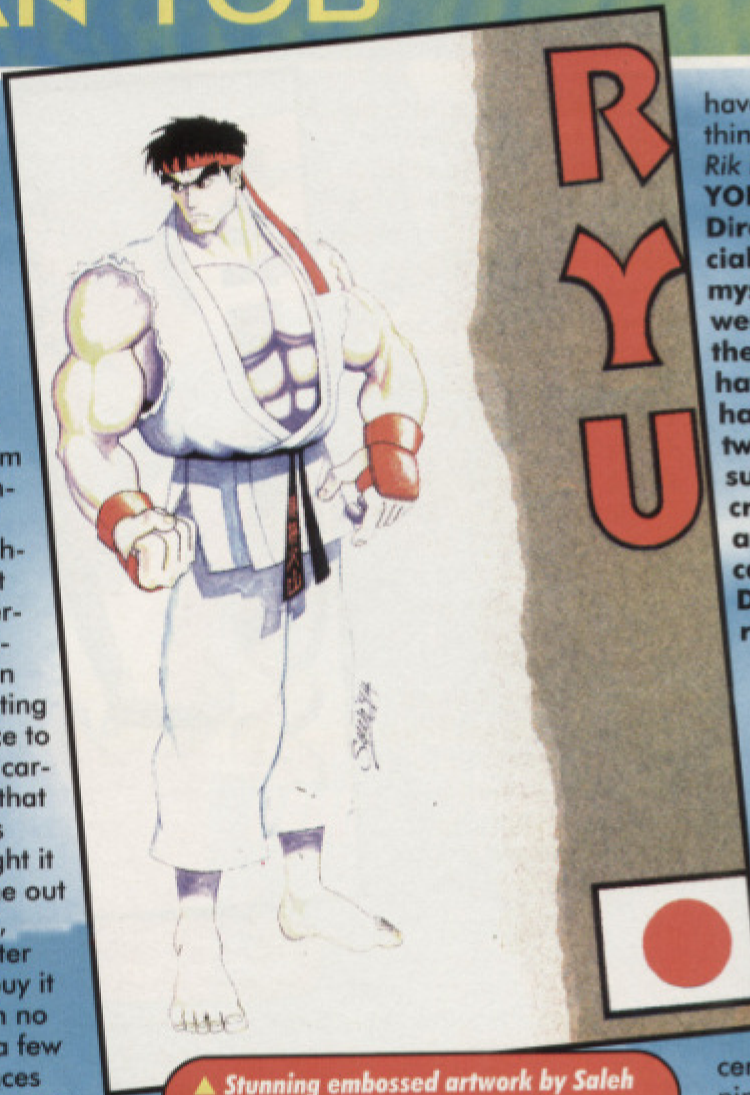
Dear Yob
Oh, thank you Mr Yob! Thank you! You've brought immense joy to my existence yet again. You'd never believe how long I've waited for a Dr Who game, and along comes Mean Machines and announces that Sega are working on one right this minute. Hurrah and huzzah for the world's most intruiging magazine. Sega had better not mess it up, that's all. And now, a highly amusing joke for your entertainment.
Captain Picard – "What machine is that, Mr Worf?".
Worf – "It's got a needle and thread...It's a genuine Singer, Captain!".
Picard – "Make it sew!"
Ha, ha, ha. Good, eh?
Paul Johnson, Skegness.
YOB:Terrible sorry, sir, but 'm going to 'ave to escort you from the premises. Y'see, you're not very funny and there's been a few complaints from the other readers. Out you go mate! And don't bother comin' back!

PENETRATIVE ACTION

Dear Yob
Am I the only one on console-worshipping Planet Z (and Earth as well) who thinks that the boxes for the new Megadrive 32 are sad? They look like they're made out of cardboard! The box artwork for Star Wars is just a couple of B-Wings and an explosion in orange technicolour. Let's hope that the game are better than the boxes. And if the Megadrive 32 needs an additional power supply, Mega-CD owners will have three of the sodding things! Each one should really have its individual socket for safety. All of this and no Daytona. Tragic. By the way, A. Camel was right, you do look like Freddy Starr!
Head of Protoplasmic Research, Planet Z
YOB:It's Freddie Starr. And the box artwork you saw was the US version. Which no one else is giving a second thought to at the moment, probably because they have friends and no odour probems. !t's the game I'm more concerned about. It's meant to be based on the Virtua Star Wars coin-op, which I completed in three credits!

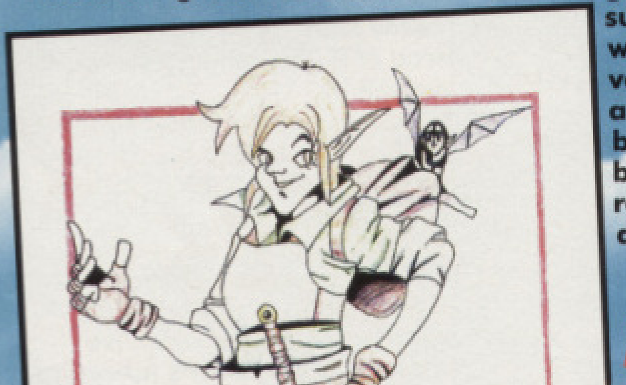
THIN DRYNESS LINES

Dear Yob
I felt I had to put print-head to fan-fold to bring up a point which no-one seems to have picked up on (or they're keeping quiet about it). This 'point' is that a great many software manufacturers keep releasing updated versions of their existing titles. A prime example is EA with their seemingly neverending re-tweaks



▲ Stunning embossed artwork by Saleh Ahmed of Luton. Superb.

of John Madden/Bill Walsh, EA Hockey, Lakers vs Celtics, Road Rash, PGA Golf, etc. Now to add insult to injury they are adding five minutes of FMV to their titles and releasing them on CD! Quite honestly I don't mind the endless rehashes, but wouldn't it be a stonking exercise in public relations and common sense to give existing owners the chance to trade in their old cartridges? A game that springs to mind is Flashback. I bought it as soon as it came out on cart, and now, twelve months later they want us to buy it again on CD with no extra game and a few new FMV sequences thrown in. Surely most people will have a copy by now. The only people who won't have a copy will be new to Megadrivin', and if they've any sense, they'll buy the discounted cart after the release of the CD. Can you make any sense out of this situation?
Shaun Davies, Barnsley
I have to agree, it's rum. But that is something we've made clear in our reviews. CD versions are usually only for those who want to get the little extra benefit the Mega-CD offers, when they don't already have the original. And the software companies get a little more exposure for their games, which normally have very short shelf lives as carts. It's mutually beneficial like that, but it should never replace original developments.



▲ Making plans for Nigel again. The flat-footed hero by Will '94.

I MOVE WITH THE TIMES

Dear Yob
Are you losing your touch? You don't insult people as much nowadays. I don't think the 'worried' mother was very insulted by your John Major-esque answer. In the reply you should have called her a fat, old, grey, wrinkly, technophobic, old fashioned ball of fungi covered mucus. A few months back, you probably would have done. Are you ill or something?
Rik Balbooer, Derbyshire
YOB:It's all down to EC Directive 154/Z2 which officially stated that people like myself and Viz magazine were "not to be as funny as they used to be". Now that I have to comply, I find it really hard to take the ps out of twonks like you. Take your surname — you sound like a cross between a nutty log and a monkey's ass. But if I can't put down saddoes in Derbyshire, there's no hope really, is there?**

HYPOALLERGENIC

Dear Yob
You're a pathetic drawing, whoever drew you should be strangled. How you came to be in Mean Machines, God only knows! My colleagues and I feel that you need a new image, flat hair with a centre parting, and a nice frilly pink frock. Less of this dribble winge pop pip, time to get down to the nitty gritty. I know your secret. You are a Nibletion baby. If you don't admit it, I'll...er...um, make you sleep with my English teacher Mrs Haggit!
Charlie Whizz-Pop, Chinng Wigle
YOB:I am not a drawing! I am a free man! I already wear silky lingerie — the stuff you sent me that smells of haddock. I feel wonderful when I wear it. I think of you...

EASILY ABSORBED

Dear Yob
Oh the innocence of youth. And there I was, thinking that Guile was a mature sensible sort of man who would never insult people when he could just as easily beat them up. Obviously I was wrong. For the benefit of Guile and other males, please let me explain my affection for Yob. Potato head? Indeed, no, no. A firm jaw, and no nose, an attractive feature on a man. And a midget, you say? Oh dear me, you poor misguided child. Ask any woman in the world if she finds Ronnie Corbett attractive, and she will answer, "Yes, Guile I do indeed," in a most fervent manner. Steel clad, don't all women love a man daring enough to sport the latest Paris catwalk fashions? Tall, blonde, and handsome is no longer what women want. Overmoist lips and heavy brow is the man of the nineties. I enclose a match, do with it what you will. It symbolises the flames of our passion. I live Yob!
Helen, Rossendale
YOB:There seems to be some confusion over my height. I'm not one of the Ginster's men, though I do have a well-filled pasty. Thick set is the most accurate description for me. But after her last letter, I have to tread very carefully where Helen's concerned. I got some stick from Yobena about it, and believe you me, you don't give that woman a pointed object if you can help it. But ta for the match, anyway.

▲ Not on my dinner party list, Carnage by Richard Edwards, Newport.



SEGA MAGAZINE: the only magazine for the discerning Sega player. Only we know exactly what you want from a magazine. Only we have the contacts necessary to bring what you want to the printed page. Take a look at the latest issue, for example...



1. MICKEY MANIA!

Sony and Psygnosis team up to bring some of the most outstanding graphics ever to the Megadrive. It looks astounding, and we have it first.

2. MEGADRIVE 32X

Only SEGA MAGAZINE has the resources to bring you eight packed pages of 32X-clusive gear. Star Wars, Virtua Racing, Metal Head... we've seen these projects and talked to the man responsible for them. PLUS! Latest news on Doom straight from the creators, id software!

3. CAPCOM EXCLUSIVE!

We all know that Capcom are responsible for some of the greatest videogames ever created. We have full access to their latest line-up of top-quality products - MegaMan: The Wily Wars and The Punisher. They're both in SEGA MAG - exclusively!

4. MORTAL KOMBAT II

The ultimate in coverage for what is shaping up to be the most incredible "kombat" game ever. Check out our eight page feature plus Megadrive AND Game Gear reviews!

5. MORE TOP REVIEWS

A vast line-up of games are put through their paces in the latest issue. Included: Formula One: Beyond the Limits, Mario Andretti, The Animals, Brutal, Zero Tolerance AND Rebel Assault... plus more!

So, it's all rather exciting then, really, isn't it?

SEGA MAGAZINE: Issue 9, out September 15. The price is a mere £2.25.

SEGA MAGAZINE
BRITAIN'S ONLY OFFICIAL SEGA MAGAZINE



I'm fair cheesed off this month when I hear that Pierce Brosnan is about to start filming the new Bond movie Goldeneye. It should have been me, shouldn't it? Never in the annals of magazine publishing has an editor ever looked so Bond-esque. I even wore a dinner suit to the last industry dinner. The compensation is that I and my assistant, Pussy Galore, are here in charge of the best Sega mag question and answer page around. And another (completely unrelated) space-filling thing. Why does Chris Evans think he can just jump the queue at Chessington or wherever, just because he's there with Rachel Tatton Brown? It's a bloody liberty, and one we won't forget when he's slipped down the slithery light entertainment dumper. Watch out for Gaby, mate. Send your calls for aid to THE VEGAS CHAPEL OF LOVE Q&A, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU

JOHN BELUSHI

Dear Steve
I have a few questions that I desperately need answering.
1. How do you expect mere mortals like myself to afford (undoubtedly class) games like Virtua Racing, which are a completely unfeasible £70?
2. Are there any good games planned for the new fangled Sega Mouse, and if so, what are they?
3. What makes Pete Sampras better than Davis Cup, 'cos I didn't read the review?
4. Any more news on Whirlwind Snooker?
5. Being a bit of a cricket nut, I was wondering if anything would be arriving on the Megadrive, Graham Gooch for example?
6. Why should I pay £150-odd for the Megadrive 32? How much are the games going to cost for this thing?
7. Has anyone been reprimanded for his/her errors on pages 90 and 91 of last month's issue?
Alex Jones, Bournemouth
STEVE:1. The usual. Saving, ram-raiding, flashing for 10 bob a peek. 2. No specific mouse games, but it should link in with strategy titles. 3. More playable, faster paced. 4. No. 5. No. 6. £50-£60. 7. Claire and Gus both got spanked bottoms. Claire, because she forgot to add clipping paths; Gus, because he likes it.

JANIS JOPLIN

Dear Steve
Please could you answer my questions for me as I've written in many times, but never had my letter printed in your brill mag.
1. Will SSF 2 on the Megadrive be the Turbo version?
2. Will a sequel to Dungeons and Dragons be released?
3. I heard a rumour of a 16-Bit Sega handheld, is this true?
4. Who are your fave characters in SSF 2 and MK 2?
H W Yip, London
STEVE:**1. It's not, but a secret Turbo mode is rumoured to be included. 2. Nya! 3. Eventually. 4. Ken (yawn) Baraka.**

KURT COBAIN

Dear Steve
I have a few questions about the Megadrive 32.
1. When will it be released?
2. Will it use J-Carts, or 4 Way Play adaptors?
3. Will it increase the number of colours on screen?
4. Will it improve the sound quality?
5. Will it produce FMV, if so how good will it be?
6. What size will the carts be, eg. 24-Bit, 32-Bit?
7. Who are producing the games for the system?
Alistair Meek, Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset
STEVE:1. November. 2. No. 3. Yes. 4. Yes. 5. Not on its own, but it improves the Mega-CDs'. 6. 16-32Megs. 7. Sega, Acclaim, Sony, Konami, Accolade etc.

TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

Dear Steve
Please answer my questions.
1. Is Virtua Racing Deluxe coming to the Megadrive 32, or should I get Virtua Racing for the Megadrive?
2. Will Operation Wolf and Operation

JIM MORRISON

Dear Steve
Oh great one, please answer my humble questions.
1. Will the arcade version of the Punisher appear on the Megadrive?
2. Are there any snake games on the Megadrive?



3. When should Rocket Knight Returns come on the Megadrive?
4. What is the worst game on the Megadrive?
5. Is Subterrania any good?
David Spencer, Brisbane
STEVE:1. Yes, from Capcom.. 2. Er, no. Cobra Command? (chortle). 3. As Sparkster for Christmas. 4. Battleship. 5. Very good.



Thunderbolt ever come out for the Megadrive?
3. We know that two awesome racing games are coming to the Megadrive 32. Are there any others planned?
Oz Downson,Kendal, Cumbria
STEVE:1. If you can wait, get Deluxe. 2. No. 3. Motocross, which is alledgedly awesome.

MARILYN MONROE

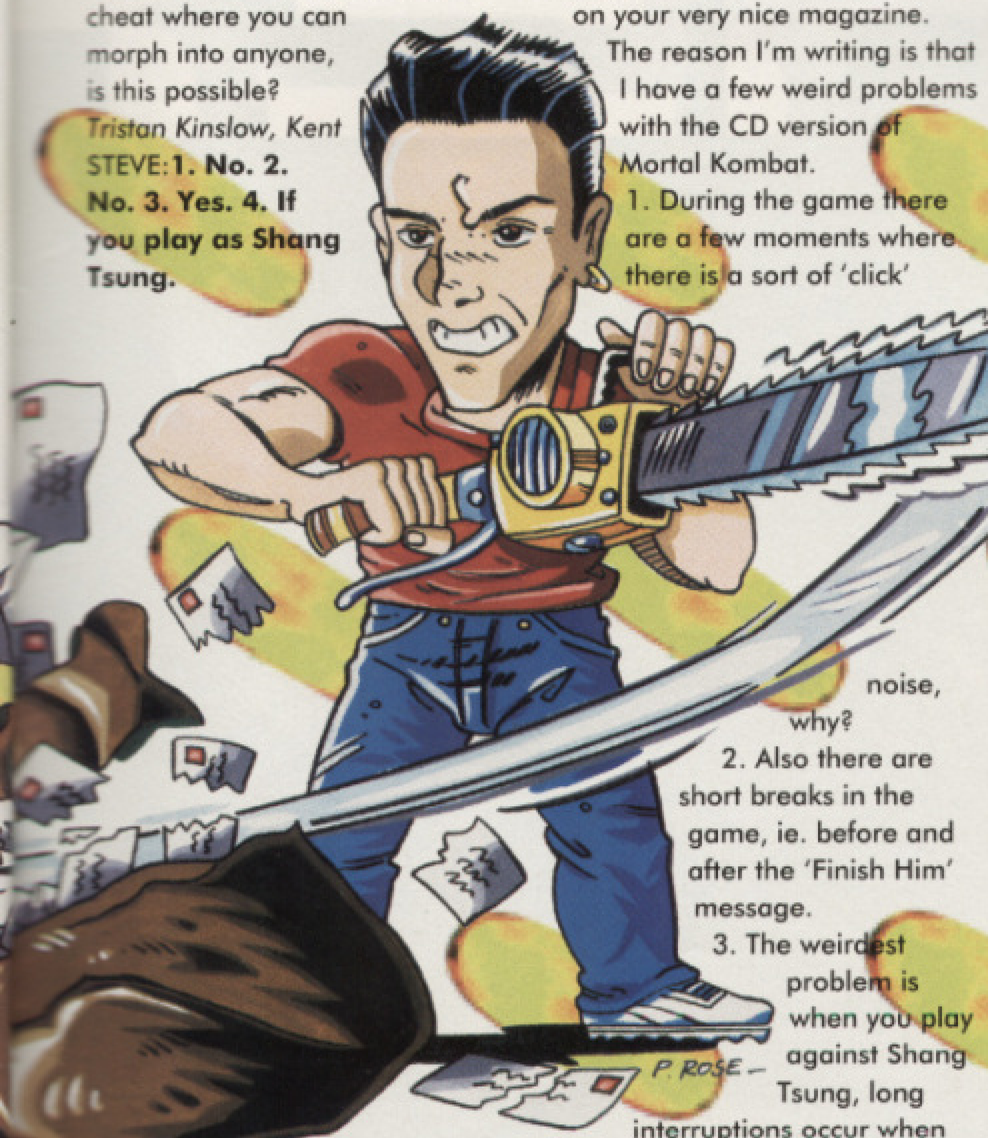
Dear Steve
Could you please answer these questions about MK 2?
1. Is it true that if you hold one of the buttons for 30 seconds without getting hit, you will morph into Goro?
2. I heard if you use just high punch and uppercuts in the first round and low kicks in the second, you will fight against Sonya. Is this true?
3. Is it true that there are three hidden characters?
4. My friend said that he did a cheat where you can morph into anyone, is this possible?
Tristan Kinslow, Kent
STEVE:**1. No. 2. No. 3. Yes. 4. If you play as Shang Tsung.**

RIVER PHEONIX

Dear Steve
I have a couple of questions about EA games on the Megadrive, please put your vast intelligence to use and answer them.
1. What has happened to the Aspect Warriors game that you said was due out in February?
2. Are EA bringing out Space Hulk on the Megadrive?
3. Are EA planning to bring out any other games to do with Games Workshop?
Simon Jones, Buckley, Clwyd
STEVE:1. It's been dumped. 2. No, begorrah! 3. None are slated for release.

JIMMY HENDRIX

Dear Steve
Firstly, I want to congratulate you on your very nice magazine.
The reason I'm writing is that I have a few weird problems with the CD version of Mortal Kombat.
1. During the game there are a few moments where there is a sort of 'click' noise, why?
2. Also there are short breaks in the game, ie. before and after the 'Finish Him' message.
3. The weirdest problem is when you play against Shang Tsung, long interruptions occur when he changes into another character, and during these interruptions he appears as a blur.
Could you please explain these rather odd problems?
Franck Dave, Schelle, Belgium
STEVE:The CD version of Mortal Kombat was found to have a hideous bug in the final confrontation. If your copy is one of those affected, I'd get in contact with Acclaim about it.



LEWIS CARROLL

Dear Steve
I own a Megadrive, and I have some questions that I need answering.
1. Will Sim City be released for the Megadrive?
2. Will a gore code be needed for MK 2?
3. Is SOR 3 really worth getting?
4. Will any classic Megadrive titles, such as FIFA and Flashback, be released as improved versions for the Megadrive 32?
Kristian Ziegler, St. Albans.
STEVE:**1. Probably not. 2. No. 3. If you're a big fan of the series. 4. There's a good possibility of a FIFA update at least.**



BERLIOZ

Dear Steve
Please answer...
1. When will Demolition Man CD be coming out?
2. Is there going to be a cart version?
3. How much will they cost?
4. Will we see Virtua Fighters in any format?
Keren Willcocks, Chesire
STEVE:1. Tragically, it's been dumped. 2 Yeah. 3. Lots of money. 4. Only on Saturn. 32X gets its own robot fighting game.

LIZA MINNELLI

Dear Steve
Put your loaf to good use, stop lazing about in the sun, and answer my questions.
1. Are there any plans for a massive role playing game for the Mega-CD, using all of its storage capacity?
2. I love the Outrun coin-op. Will it come out for the Megadrive 32?
3. Are there anymore Terminator games planned for any system?
4. Will Core ever make a Thunderhawk 2 or something similar?
5. Is Chuck Rally any good? Is it better than Mario Kart?
Colin Livingstone, St. Brelade, Jersey
STEVE:1. Lunar Silver Star is that very game and Shining Force CD. 2. Not the original. 3. No. 4. Battlecorps is sort of similar. 5. Too early to say. It's now called BC Racer.

This bit is called the endpiece. Sounds a bit rude, doesn't it? Flashing the word 'endpiece' about the place could get a mag closed down. Anyway, an endpiece is a bit of anomaly. A bit like your appendix, with no real function, but you can use it to say 'see ya next month', and swallowed chewing gum won't stick to it and kill you. Byeee!

BE THER





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MYSTIC REG'S NEXT Month

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Your destiny is written in the stars. We are but cosmic microbes within what could be the vast test tube of life. As such, let us see what the nutty professors overseeing us have in store...

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 — Feb 19)
A time of change. The sun passing through Jupiter indicates a peroid of unsettled feelings await. A lucky herring marked with the sign of a distant relation could bring a pools win your way. Perhaps. Destiny draws you to a magazine with the initials M, M and S.

PISCES (Feb 20 — March 20)
A time of change. A face you have seen for several years will appear on your doorstep. A dripping tap could prelude household repairs if the plug isn't removed. A packet of broken biscuits leads to new, exciting love.

ARIES (March 21 — April 20)
A time of change. A horde of tiny suicidal creatures is set to invade your video game system. Again. The words 'Exclusive' and 'Review' will feature heavily for you a month from now. A man offering sweets could lead to rotten teeth.

TAURUS (April 21 — May 21)
A time of change. A long distance love may come to an early end, unless it doesn't. A contretemps with a person in authority or the murder of a loved one could result in a peroid of solitude. Fate belongs to those with tandems. Someone with rotten teeth could lead you to a dentist.

GEMINI (May 22 — June 21)
A time of change. There will be Maximum Carnage in the country's leading Sega magazine which will influence a buying decision. A rare floral hybrid unveils destiny's plans for love and finance. But it's time to be cruel to be kind.

CANCER (June 22 — July 23)
A time of change. An early morning invites a meeting with a man stashing bottles in a strange vehicle. A delicate dietry problem could result in a warm feeling which repels a love aspect. A dentist could offer you rotten sweets.

LEO (July 24 — Aug 23)
A time of change. An item of loose clothing on an escalator will keep you hanging around. A root vegetable in an all-too familiar shape may win your affections, but such love is doomed. Those in urban areas should strike first.

SISTER MARIA LOUISA OF THE GOLDEN GRAHAM ADDS:

Sega owners of the world, listen or perish. The crashing of many comets on Jupiter signifies the end of the world, and many magazines shrivel and die. But chin up, MEAN MACHINES SEGA is a right rivveting read and will be so eter-



VIRGO (Aug 24 — Sept 23)
A time of change. Your natural brilliance and modesty sees you being the best at everything. Right now anything you want is yours. But beware of a cat with one pink eye. It's arrival leads to a time of grief for loved ones. A rotten dentist can lead you to no teeth.

LIBRA (Sept 24 — Oct 23)
A time of change. A three-wheeled vehicle leads to mocking from those around you. Your new-found luck will impress those around you, but not for long. Those of you with outmoded consoles will enter Kombat. Again.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 — Nov 22)
A time of change. Parental guidance is required at a nearby picture house. A moody friend is hiding a cash secret. Help and a reward is yours. A legacy awaits its rightful owner within the epilogoe of a favourite novel. But be careful. Oh, and someone's boffing your wife.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 — Dec 21)
A time of change. Important news from overseas will rekindle an old flame. A bearded pet's regular complaint could lead you to a new, but volatile, relationship. Deep Space Nine also waits those owning 'Mega' and 'Drives.'

CAPRICORN (Dec 22 — Jan 20)
A time of change. A fit of pique leads to a time of family grief. Mood swings lead to the discovery of lost relatives in a public garden. A silver spoon promotes healthy growth in a small child. A man with no teeth will lead you to a place of old people.

REG'S PSYCHIC MEDIUM WAVE
+ Nev of Northampton: Your love is returned + Gaby of Leeds: The game based on the new De Niro film is imminent + Keith of Havant: She never loved you. Die + William of Kilburn: Fish secret awaits in next door's bin + Andrew of Oldham: Ecco will return in a month + Angel of Glasgow: Your legacy is a stain on the pub wall. + Karen of Braintree: You have a moustache, but everyone's too embarrassed to tell you.

AND IT'S OUT ON THE 30TH SEPTEMBER!

Have you got enough mates?



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FOUR PLAYER POWER

Codemasters' **J-CART** is the world's only video games cartridge that gives you simultaneous **four-player action instantly.** You don't need anything, - so you can **forget adaptors.** It's all there. With two built-in joypad connectors, just slam two joypads into the J-CART, the usual pair in the console and get ready for an **adrenaline-pumping four-player challenge game.**

The question is... have you really got enough mates?

THE SEQUEL TO

MicroMachines

OUT NOVEMBER 25th ON 4-PLAYER J-CART



PETE SAMPRAS TENNIS ON J-CART OUT NOW



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